Chronicles

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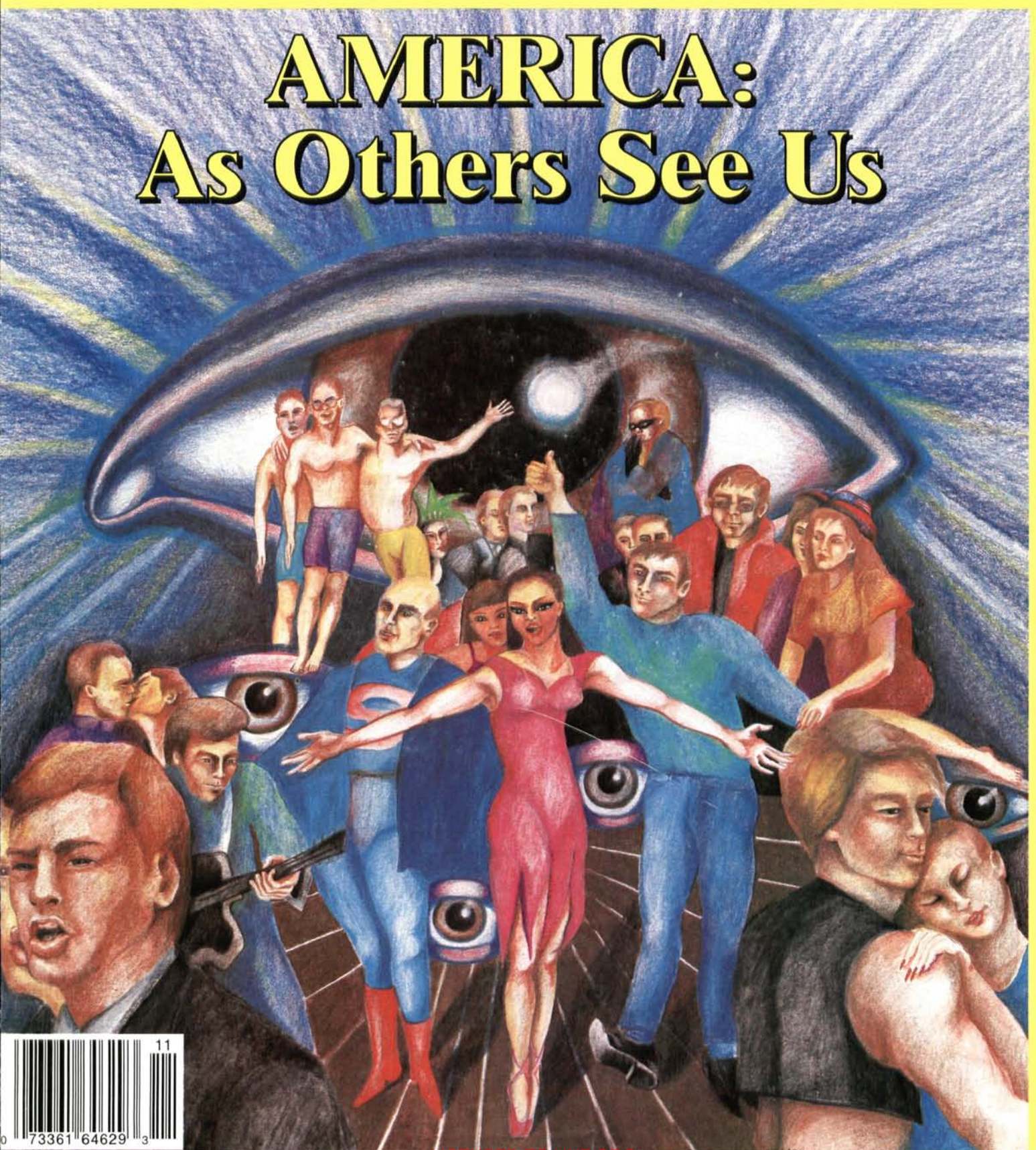
AMERICA: As Others See Us



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Chronicles
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CONTENTS

AMERICA: AS OTHERS SEE US

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

The backward march of democracy: Yonkers, Jennings, and Mike Dukakis; Léonie Adams, R.I.P. 4

PERSPECTIVE

Travelers' Tales 6
European innocents abroad in America.
by Thomas Fleming

VIEWS

American Manners 9
The best of manners? The worst of manners? Both.
by John Lukacs

The Iron Rod of American 'Liberalism' 15
Liberals sailing under false colors should fly the skull and bones.
by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn

Digging for the Truth in *Pravda* 18
Glasnost, schmasnost.
by Leon Steinmetz

OPINIONS

Crackers & Roundheads 22
—*Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South* by Grady McWhiney
by Clyde Wilson

The President's President 25
—*1999: Victory Without War* by Richard Nixon
by Arnold Beichman

The Madness of Art 27
—*Manic Power: Robert Lowell and His Circle* by Jeffrey Meyers
by James W. Tuttleton

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Getting It Right by John B. Judis 29
—*The Conservative Movement* by Paul Gottfried and Thomas Fleming

Saint William by John C. Chalberg 32
—*William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives* by John B. Judis

Old Possum by Warren Smith 33
—*Possum, And Other Receits for the Recovery of Southern Being* by Marion Montgomery

Play It Again, Alger by Terry Teachout 34
—*Recollections of a Life* by Alger Hiss

Frontier Justice by Odie Faulk 35
—*Law and Community on the Mexican California Frontier: Anglo-American Expatriates and the Clash of Legal Traditions, 1821-1846* by David J. Langum

Molder of America by E. Christian Kopff 36
—*Uncommon Clay: The Life and Works of Augustus Saint-Gaudens* by Burke Wilkinson

The Impossibility of a Book by Ana Selic 37
—*Pushkin House* by Andrei Bitov

Phi Beta Kappa Fake by Jane Greer 38
—*Most Likely to Succeed: Six Women From Harvard and What Became of Them* by Fran Schumer

No Water in the Wine by James L. Sauer 38
—*Chesterton, Seer of Science* by Stanley Jaki

Wings of the Navy by Wayne Michael Sarf 39
—*Flight of the Intruder* by Stephen Coonts

Making Love and War by Judith Chettle 40
—*Talking Across the World: The Love Letters of Olaf Stapleton and Agnes Miller, 1913-1919*, edited by Robert Crossley

Measured Speech by William C. Rice 41
—*The Selected Poems: Expanded Edition* by A.R. Ammons

In Search of Absolutes by Thomas P. McDonnell 42
—*Fleeing the Whore of Babylon: A Modern Conversion Story* by James J. Thompson, Jr.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Batavia 43
by Bill Kauffman

Letter From the Volunteer State by William R. Hawkins 45

Letter From the Lower Right 46
by John Shelton Reed

Letter From the Heartland 48
by Jane Greer

VITAL SIGNS

LAW

The Grove City Horror Show 51
by Edward D. Snow Jr.

ETHNIC CONFLICT

Who Speaks for the Jews? 52
by Elliot Rothenberg

POP CULTURE

Live From San Diego, It's Vladimir Posner 54
by K.L. Billingsley

Surfin' Safari 55
by Gary S. Vasilash

ART

Drake at the Morgan 56
by Shehbaz H. Safrani

Krystyna Jachniewicz 57
by Anna Mycek-Wodecki

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On 'Letter From B.U.' 57
On 'Art as Politics' 58
On 'Rights of Clergy' 58
On 'Fathers Are Striking Back' 58
On 'Hangouts for the KGB' 58

DEPARTMENTS

POETRY
Some Epigrams by Fred Chappell 20

REVISIONS
Reinventing Community: *Seeking Many Inventions: The Idea of Community in America* 31

BOOKS IN BRIEF 29

On the Cover

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Yonkers pays for a federal judge's vision of a free society: a Jimmy Carter appointee, Federal District Court Judge Leonard B. Sand, has fined the city of Yonkers for resisting a federal desegregation scheme. Eight years after the NAACP and the US Justice Department filed suit against Yonkers for hesitating to accept a 1000-unit low- and middle-income housing project, the "mild-mannered" Judge Sand also levied personal fines upon the four city legislators who voted against the plan.

Most Yonkers residents, many of whom escaped similar state-supported housing developments elsewhere in New York, have been loud in their praise of the councilmen. As Julia Troy, 83, expressed it to a *New York Times* reporter, she "would rather see the city go bankrupt" than face the drugs, crime, and blight that the proposed federal scheme would bring to Yonkers. Or, as John Liggio, 62, says, "We worked and saved all our lives so we could move out of the Bronx to this beautiful neighborhood, and for what? So we won't be able to sell our house? Its value has lost $100,000."

"Where's this judge coming from?" asked Walter Small, another Yonkers resident and a Vietnam vet. "What's he trying to do? . . .[M]ake a name for himself? You have people who would volunteer to go to jail [the four city councilmen—Nicholas V. Longo, Edward J. Fagan Jr., Peter Chema, Henry Spallone]. They're doing what we elected them to do."

Judge Sand, who has never been elected to anything, finds his work "satisfying." "I like to think that I have a reasonable perspective on what a judge's role is in our society," he says. "I have a sense I am doing my job."

The Yonkers case represents more than judicial arrogance. The people of Yonkers elected their City Council in fair and undisputed elections, but in the name of democratic equality the federal courts are waging war against the democratic process. In this struggle of upper-class judges against middle- and lower-class citizens, the judiciary takes shelter under its own interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment, whose only purpose was to guarantee voting rights to former slaves. For over 50 years the federal courts have perversely misread that amendment to give themselves the power to deny *all* the provisions of the Bill of Rights. We don't need a second Constitutional Convention. What we do need is an amendment that forbids federal courts from meddling in the affairs of state and local communities.

I wouldn't be a public figure for anything. Think of what comes back to haunt you! Take Dan Quayle. Take Peter Jennings, the Dan Quayle of 1965. Nothing is new under the sun, it's just your old embarrassment with somebody else's name on it. Remember Jennings the night of Quayle's acceptance speech at the Republican Convention? Tut-tutting about that business of family influence, and Quayle's youth and inexperience? Well, Jennings is 50 now, but hey, Peter, let's think back 23 years or so. Back to the midst of the Vietnam War, which you as a Canadian had no obligation to fight, of course. Back to when a good-looking 26-year-old named Peter Jennings was given a solo anchor slot on ABC, in the network's effort to wrest those . . . *baby boomer* viewers away (sound familiar?) from Huntley and Brinkely and Walter Cronkite. A change made for the soundest, newsiest of reasons, and which Jennings as a seasoned news veteran undisputably deserved, all those nasty comments about "glamourcaster" and "anchorboy" notwithstanding.

Nor did young Peter's career in broadcasting, which started at Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (not counting that radio show he had when he was 10, "Peter's Program"), have anything to do with the fact that his father was a vice president at CBC. Young Peter, we can be sure, never ever called home and said Dad, can you help me out? Not even at 10! It was pure talent.

We shouldn't be hearing any comments from Jennings about Quayle's C-average at DePauw. At least Quayle *stayed in college*. After only the briefest of stints at Carleton in Canada, Jennings gave up on higher education altogether. That LL.D. from Rider College (in New Jersey) listed in his *Who's Who* entry is honorary. Which is to say that even by today's lax educational standards he did nothing to earn it.

But, then, let's not discount the school of life, the school of hard knocks, to which Jennings undoubtably returned after finally requesting reassignment from anchoring to foreign reporting (but only after two years at the main desk!). No doubt it was in those ensuing years in the wilds—i.e., London—that he learned to pronounce "Nicaragua" so authentically (why not "Frawnce"? Why not "Scootland"? If he's going to pronounce foreign states as the foreigners do, why can't he be consistent?). Ah, Peter. Our Person-of-the-Week moraliser, our very own teleprompted Canadian, our rock, our *anchor*. Take comfort in knowing we are all victims of history, especially of our own history.

—*Jack Ramsay*

Léonie Adams, one of the loveliest poets of the first half of this century, died this summer at the age of 88. This "nature" poet from (of all places) Brooklyn, was a protegé of Louis Untermeyer, who championed her early

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work in *The New Republic*. The natural world and the "tradition of Nature" were a necessary part of her work: "It was only thus that I could catch a keep the tune." As for "other and larger modes," those she left to others. Her ambitions were modest in the same way a modest man does not try to save humanity, just his nextdoor neighbor. As someone else has noted, such a man is a lot more likely to do humanity some good.

Her final book of poetry, *Poems: A Selection* came out in 1954, the year she shared the Bollingen Prize with Louise Bogan. Her later years were spent in New Milford, Connecticut, her writing well behind her. Since poets should be allowed to write their own epitaphs, here is the opening of "Thought's End":

I watched the hills drink the last
color of light,
All shapes grow bright and wane
on the pale air.
Till down the traitorous east
there came the night,
And swept the circle of my
seeing bare.
Its intimate beauty like a
wanton's veil
Tore from the void as from an
empty face.
I felt at being's rim all being
fail,
And my one body pitted against
space.

Still more apt are these lines from "Death and the Lady":

Tell me, Lady,
If in your breast the lively
breath
May flicker for a little space,
What ransom will you give to
death,
Lady?" he said.
"O not one joy, O not one
grace,
And what is your will to my
will?
I can outwit parched fancies
still."
To Death said the Lady.

Good poetry has always been a bad joke on death, and always been the surest route to, if not immortality, then some limited rough equivalent. "Aye," she wrote in "Sundown," "tatter you and rend,/ Oak heart, to your profession mourning, not obscure/ The outcome, not crespuscular, on the deep floor . . . " I am sorry she is gone. (KD)

That the Greek community is wildly enthusiastic about Michael Dukakis is perfectly understandable. He is, as they say, one of their own. But there is a troubling twist. Early in the campaign is was being said that Dukakis is "a member in good standing" in the Greek Orthodox Church. At almost every level of Greek Orthodoxy in this country Dukakis has been fêted and, to all appearances, his campaign has received the church's blessing. This is especially striking in view of his vigorously pro-abortion policy, which is in diametrical opposition to the teaching of the Greek Orthodox Church. There is also the lesser issue of Dukakis's being married outside the church. And yet the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and its local churches seem to be winking at the discrepancies.

Students of Orthodoxy in this country, such as the late Alexander Schmemann, have long noted that it is an open question as to whether Orthodoxy in America is more an ethnic than a religious phenomenon. To be sure, and as is the case also with other religious communities, more than one dynamic can come into play. But for the sake of religious and spiritual integrity, the very least that might be expected from Greek Orthodox leaders is that they clarify the ecclesiastical status of Michael Dukakis, and publicly reaffirm their own teaching, notably on abortion.

The Archdiocese has said only that it "will not become party" to the efforts to "inject religion into the political life of this nation." It would seem that the spiritual integrity of the church has been subordinated to ethnic pride. The inference is hard to resist that the Greek in Greek Orthodox is much more important than the Orthodoxy. Twenty-eight years ago many Roman Catholics, in their eagerness to have one of their own in the White House, overlooked the fact that he was not much of a Roman Catholic. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese should think again about the unseemliness of a church playing the role of political mistress.

—Richard John Neuhaus

In the forthcoming issue of *Chronicles*:

Utopia Unlimited

"It was Wilsonianism that saved Franklin D. Roosevelt from defeat in 1940; Wilsonianism and, of course, the useful Second World War. Roosevelt was in the direct Wilson tradition when he waded in gradually, first affirming neutrality, then declaring for quarantine, then discovering in January 1941 that the real objective of the war—whether Churchill and others fighting it knew this or not—was the global establishment of the Four Freedoms, and then months later wrapping the whole war, including Stalin's participation from June on, into the Atlantic Charter. It was not a very long step from the Charter to the infamous Declaration on Liberated Europe composed at Yalta."

—from "Our Stumbling Giant" by Robert Nisbet

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TRAVELERS' TALES *by Thomas Fleming*

Coelum, non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt was Horace's observation on the narrowing effects of travel: "Those who go across the sea change their weather but not their mind." It is the rare tourist who gets more out of his expeditions than a confirmation of his prejudices. One of the most intelligent visitors to the United States was Robert Louis Stevenson, who—unlike the Trollopes and Dickens and Oscar Wilde, who saw life only from the safe perspective of the middle class—traveled by steerage and on immigrant trains. But even Stevenson brought his Scottish prejudices with him. After visiting the United States, he offered this version of the Horatian tag: "Change Glenlivet for Bourbon, and it is still whiskey, only not so good." Perhaps he never tasted a good bourbon.

Most foreigners, no matter how long they are with us, regard America as a wife whom they may come to take for granted, but never understand. Of course, every journalist, intellectual, and Japanese tourist who steps off a plane believes that he has the clue to a national character that continues to puzzle the natives. I was once interviewed by an Australian journalist doing a story on regional politics in the US. Being a hardworking and open-minded sort, he had picked up a few authentic tidbits and put them into his story—he'd even driven an hour out of the way to interview an eccentric living on the edge of the woods. However, the published version of his piece could have been written by a staff writer for *The New York Times*. His editor back in Sydney *knew* that the details of small town and rural life did not fit the big picture of life according to *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *The Atlantic*.

On another occasion, I spent an evening with a local television anchorman, recently transplanted from Buffalo to

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South Carolina. Inevitably, he was writing a book about the South. After reading Cash's *The Mind of the South* and attending a few lower-middle-class cocktail parties in Charleston, he had concluded that Southerners were stupid, ignorant, credulous, and bigoted. Of course there were no race problems in Buffalo, no ignorance, no religion, and of course he had not run into any cultivated Southerners.

Journalists are hardly alone in preferring ignorance. One of modernism's most charming traits is a blind faith in naiveté and inexperience. I well remember the worst graduate student in classics I ever met, son of a distinguished Northeastern art historian. He knew neither Latin nor Greek, but—he assured me—his very lack of training was a guarantee of freshness and originality. It is, of course, much easier to understand the *Iliad* from a Monarch outline. Original texts, like real experiences, only muddle the picture. As Wilde's Lady Bracknell so sagely observed: "Ignorance is like a rare, exotic fruit: touch it and the bloom is gone."

Travelers were not always so cocksure. Herodotus, the first and best of the literary tourists who have survived, preserved a sort of boyish simplicity throughout his researches. It allowed him to repeat the various sides of a political controversy, preserving the equally valuable myth alongside of plausible accounts. He also swallowed the nonsense fed to him by Egyptian priests and tour guides. The result is first-rate reportage—Naipaul without the sneers—brilliantly arranged as part of a cosmic struggle between East and West. We make do with Jonathan Raban. As Paul Fussell said recently in another context, the age cries out for a Jonathan Swift, and we have to settle for Gore Vidal.

Vidal might as well stay in Italy all year long (instead of just most of the time), for all he understands of American politics. I know Americans who like to think the *Economist* beats American publications in covering the US political scene. This is true to the extent that *Economist* reporters do not exempt New York liberals from their general contempt. But reading about the United States in a European newspaper is a little like watching *Ran*, Kurosawa's powerful adaptation of *Macbeth*. Sure, we recognize the story, but there is something a little strange about the dress, not to say the accent.

Alexis de Tocqueville is usually held up as the example of a foreigner who understood us better than we understood ourselves. He was unquestionably a penetrating analyst—his writings on France are sufficient to prove that. When he turned his intelligence to things American, the results were a book that continues to influence the way we look upon our country. But if Tocqueville was an exception, he was still an exception that proves the rule: he came to America with a thesis to prove (or at least a central question to answer), and he found the evidence in the townships of New England. On the rest of the country, he drew a blank, establishing a pattern to be followed by Mrs. Trollope (who did get to Cincinnati) and other literary visitors.

The best European observers of American political life have followed in Tocqueville's footsteps in trying to discover how it is that "democracy" works here, but not in other places. Henry Sumner Maine thought the answer could be found in all the restraints we had laid upon popular government. He predicted, quite correctly, that the English would do themselves mischief if they attempted to establish popular rule without the checks of indirect representation or federalism. He also realized that in the democracies of the future, the old corruption of "giving to expectant partisans places paid out of the taxes" would be replaced by a new corruption of "legislating away the property of one class and transferring it to another." In America we called it a New Deal. Under the old American system at least, the propertied classes would have been able to cut the cards.

Tocqueville was among the first foreigners to understand that our system worked not so much because the framers of the Constitution were in possession of any special genius as because the facts of day-to-day life in small towns and rural areas had taught us the practical lessons of self-government. Of course, we could have learned the same lessons from Jefferson and Adams and Patrick Henry, but Americans are always overawed by foreigners, especially if one of their ancestors had been sufficiently bloodthirsty to earn himself a title. We even kowtow to life peers who virtually purchase their titles with money or, worse, with that species of chicanery we call public service.

Our gullibility is something extraordinary. What else explains the success of Christopher Hitchens and Alexander Cockburn in their careers as latter-day Tocquevilles? I can understand how there got to be so many British academics in American universities. As one of our editors points out, one's colleagues won't endure a talented American, so the only way to hire competent scholars is to make sure they're foreigners. Foreign birth and foreign loyalties present no obstacle to the work of an historian or classicist.

With political journalists it is a different story. There is no evidence that either Mr. Cockburn or Mr. Hitchens know anything of life in America—or much of anything else, for that matter. Poor Hitchens, taking his usual potshots at conservatives (*The Nation*, June 11), tries to grapple with the question of Michael Dukakis's standing in the Orthodox Chuch: "For not having baptized his children he is denied the solace of certain sacraments [e.g., communion], but he is not excommunicated." Like most contributors to *The Nation*, Hitchens needs to buy a dictionary.

Hitchens may not be more ignorant or more malevolent than most American journalists, but we're stuck with them. Why we don't deport a venomous little toad like Alexander Cockburn is a mystery. There is altogether too much loose talk about anti-Semitism in America, but I cannot imagine why else the left puts up with Cockburn.

I wish I could say that conservatives were exempt from the general xenophilic gullibility, but they aren't. Liberals like John Judis (in his articles in *The New Republic*) and Dan Himmelfarb (in *Commentary*) are not entirely off base in detecting a certain foreign flavor in the American right. (I only wish they would get their facts straight. M.E. Bradford and Clyde Wilson are not counterreformational, counterrevolutionary Catholics, but Jeffersonian Protestants. Don't these guys ever get outside of the Washington-New York axis?) Conservatives have been, perhaps, excessively preoccupied with questions of social stability, hierarchy, and the majesty of the state. In this, they have been influenced not a little by the distinguished European rightists with whom they have made common cause.

On balance, this influence has been enormously benefi-

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cial and has resulted in a broader debate and a higher level of generalization. We have to some extent escaped from the parochial notions of American exceptionalism and view with suspicion our messianic role among the nations of the earth. The essays by distinguished metics in this issue alone are sufficient proof of their contribution. Europeans remain, however, European, and they miss certain things even a yokel or a political sociologist takes for granted. Tocqueville, for example, missed entirely the significance of Andrew Jackson in strengthening the executive branch of the government, and his successors have uniformly denounced Jackson for introducing the spoils system and introducing mob rule. Of course, he did neither. His real sin was being a Jeffersonian.

It is precisely that Jeffersonian tradition that so many of our European friends hold responsible for all the ills of the commonwealth, and they have been followed by a majority of conservatives. Without wishing to stir up the old animosities between Hamiltonians and Jeffersonians, Feds and anti-Feds, I would like to observe that on most of the questions of the past 50 years, virtually all of the Founding Fathers would speak out with one voice against growth of the national government, the usurpations of the Supreme Court, and the welfare state's depredations against family and community life. Forrest McDonald has done an heroic job of rescuing Hamilton from liberal statists, and a proper reading of Dumas Malone's *Jefferson* would convince any American that the party of Wilson, Roosevelt, and Dukakis is not the party of Jefferson.

European conservatives, coming out of traditions of clericalism and aristocracy, will never be made to understand that what are bulwarks against tyranny in France would serve a quite different purpose in America. For better or worse, our conservative tradition is closer to communal libertarianism than to the French Counterrevolution, as much Cobbett as Burke, and even—stretching a continental analysis—smacks more of syndicalist labor unions than of the monarchist legitimists who continue to claim the thrones of France and Spain. What is conservatism in France is radicalism in America. As Edward O. Wilson says somewhere, it would be folly to take our politics from the ants. It is only a little less foolish to take them from the French.

It is hard to blame a Frenchman or German or Hungarian for failing to comprehend what so few Americans are able to grasp. The fault lies entirely with the Americans, not only for accepting a European perspective on American democracy but even more for reinfecting each new set of visitors with the Old World disease. It can be observed, time after time, how European conservatives arrive with open minds, eager to figure out what makes us tick, until they meet up with one or another rightist sectary—Old Right or Neoconservative—who fits them out with a mythic framework of demons and saints. (Depending on the point of view, everything went bad with either Andrew Jackson or Lyndon Johnson.) That these interpretations of our history are almost entirely derived from third-rate liberals like Arthur Schlesinger, seems to trouble no one. The conservative role in American intellectual life is to believe what the liberals tell us and then do the opposite. If they like Jackson or celebrate the populists, then we must hate them. If they like Proust, we prefer John P. Marquand or James Gould Cozzens (both of whom, let me add, I read with pleasure), and if *The New Republic* talks about rock music, then we learn to content ourselves with Guy Lombardo or, at best, Duke Ellington. And so we send our travelers home with some very strange notions about the state of the Republic.

Even if a European never spoke with an American conservative, he would have a hard enough time of it. Every man in a foreign country is more or less an imbecile. No matter how long he stays, he will never get the drift of even half of the pointless jokes and references. For all the many times I have been to Canada, I understand next to nothing of Canadian politics. I did not realize the depths of my ignorance until I struck up a conversation with the editors of *The Idler* in Toronto. Canada is as close to being American as it is possible to be, and yet we remain worlds apart in some ways. An American there, a Canadian or European here, are in the position of a son-in-law at the first family union of his wife's relatives.

This is one of the perils of anthropology. E.E. Evans-Pritchard, who did so much superb fieldwork among the Nuer of the Sudan, was still the repeated butt of their practical jokes. On one occasion they kept him up all night long, telling bizarre stories to illustrate their ideas on sex. Afterwards, they could not repress their amusement over the ease with which the Englishman had been taken in. Throughout her entire life, Margaret Mead never did catch on to what should have been obvious: natives are not necessarily less intelligent than the civilized traveler. Most journalists don't catch on either, although a good foreign journalist, like a good anthropologist, can often see things that custom has made invisible to us. Leopold Tyrmand (*Chronicles*' late editor) was full of such insights, and it is interesting to note that among the best English correspondents in the US is the *Spectator*'s Ambrose Evans-Pritchard. Perhaps he learned something from the old man.

The Fourth Annual Erasmus Lecture

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by

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger

Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.
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AMERICAN MANNERS *by John Lukacs*

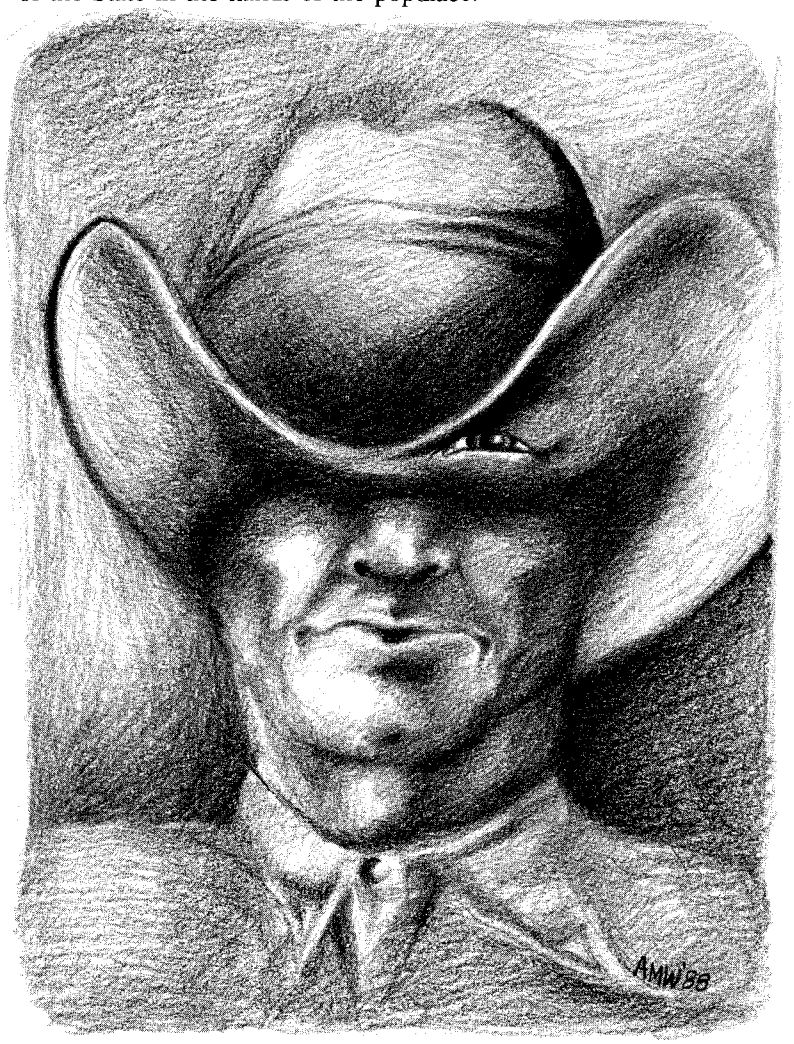
"Nothing, at first sight, seems less important than the external formalities of human behavior," wrote Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*, "yet there is nothing to which men attach more importance. They can get used to anything except living in a society which does not share their manners. The influence of the social and political system on manners is therefore worth serious consideration." But what *are* manners? "Definitions," said Dr. Johnson, "are tricks for pedants." A definition of manners will not do. We may, however, discriminate, attempting to say what manners are *not*. Manners are more deep-seated than fashions and styles; they are also more enduring. Manners have certain things in common with etiquette but they are broader than etiquette, which concentrates on particular situations and special occasions. And while a sensitive and sensible minority plays an important part in the creation and the dissemination of manners, manners are not exclusively, or even primarily, an aristocratic phenomenon.

Like character, but unlike fashions, styles, or etiquette, manners change gradually. No matter how self-centered or introspective, a man may not know much about his own manners, while other people will. This is true of a nation, too. When it comes to American manners, we ought to read the observations of foreigners.

Frances Trollope and Alexis de Tocqueville came to America about the same time. Mrs. Trollope was a middle-class Englishwoman, a literary housewife. Tocqueville was a French aristocrat, a political philosopher. Upon returning home, she wrote *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, he *Democracy in America*.

Mrs. Trollope's title is deceiving. *Domestic Manners of the Americans* is a travel book about the young United States, not very interesting, in spite (rather than because) of being archly critical. Her theme is summed up early. "The total and universal want of good, or even pleasing, manners, both in males and females, is . . . remarkable." And later: "It should seem that nature herself requires some centuries of schooling before she becomes perfectly accomplished in ministering to the luxuries of man, and . . . the champagne and the Bordeaux of the Union may appear simultaneously with a Shakespeare, a Raphael, and a Mozart." Not so.

At times, however, she could be acute. Observing "the immaculate delicacy" of the ladies in a Western American city, she wrote, "I confess I was sometimes tempted to suspect that this ultra-refinement was not very deep-seated. It often appeared to me like the consciousness of grossness, that wanted a veil; but the veil was never gracefully adjusted." The odd thing is that all the prejudices of this middle-class woman were in favor of aristocracy. She "endeavored to show how greatly the advantage is on the side of those who are governed by the few, instead of the many." She abjured "the wild schemes of placing all power of the State in the hands of the populace."



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Her contemporary Tocqueville, on the other hand, was an aristocrat (his Norman ancestry and title went back to the middle of the 11th century) who had a great and open-eyed interest in democracy. In the second volume of *Democracy in America* (which, at the time of its publication, received less favorable notice than Mrs. Trollope's book), several of his chapters deal with American manners. His most summary statement reads: "In democracies manners are never as refined as among aristocracies, but they are also never so coarse."

That statement is both subtle and profound, with a meaning that escaped Mrs. Trollope.

We have reached a stage in our imperial development where the staffs, the cooks, the decorators, the planners, the social directors of the White House incorporate a ceremonial organization that surpasses that of Versailles at the time of Louis XIV.

The great problem of the future of civilization, which this French nobleman answered in the 1830's in a then wholly unexpected way, was whether democracy—at that time uniquely incarnated by the United States—could be prevented from debouching into radical and revolutionary extremes. Tocqueville observed that the problem might be the very opposite. It was the tendency of democratic society to form a vast current of conformity and mediocrity, the existence and the essence of which would be merely obscured by an incessant agitation of petty movements on the surface. He realized (as had few others, foremost among them his American contemporary James Fenimore Cooper) that the pressure of public opinion—or, more precisely, the pressure of an *assumed* public opinion—was a sometimes salutary but more often stifling regulator of all aspects of the Americans' lives, including their manners.

Tocqueville was impressed with the high moral tone of marital relations in America, where fidelity was "more obligatory than anywhere else." Even among the American upper classes circumstances "oblige the wives to stay at home and watch in person very closely over the details of domestic economy." He found that in many ways American women were admirable wives and mothers. The fear that democracy would lead to unbridled license was nonsense. "In the United States men seldom compliment women, but they daily show how much they esteem them."

There was, of course, another side to this. "In America, a woman loses her independence forever in the bonds of matrimony. While there is less constraint on girls there than anywhere else, a wife submits to strict obligations. For the former, her father's home is a house of freedom and pleasure, for the latter, her husband's is almost a cloister." The pretty and spirited Betsy Patterson of Baltimore, who had married Napoleon's brother Jérôme (the marriage was not a success), saw that very clearly. When her father asked her to return to America, she refused. "I think it is quite as rational to go to balls and dinners as to get children, which people must do in Baltimore to kill time."

Well—150 years later this is not what people do in Baltimore to kill time. And here we come to our second difficulty, which is not the definition but the history of manners: their change as well as their continuity. "The Necessity of Manners" is the first chapter in Harold Nicolson's *Good Behaviour*. There he wrote that his book is neither a social history nor a manual of etiquette; that it is, in reality, a study of "successive types of civility," from ancient Athens to the 20th century. But in the relatively short history of the United States, "types of civility" have changed, perhaps especially in the relations of the sexes. As late as 1955 Nicolson was critical (as were also many American writers) of the power of American wives over their husbands, and of American mothers over their sons. (What feminists would now think of such attributions of an American "matriarchal" society I leave to the reader to decide.) But there *has* been a change. In William Maxwell's fine novel *Time Will Darken It*, his shy and sensitive protagonist, a Midwestern lawyer, in 1912 speaks harshly to his secretary on one occasion; he would never talk that way to his wife. I am inclined to think that the opposite would prevail today. In Evan Connell's exquisite portrait of *Mrs. Bridge*, her relationship to her husband in the 1920's and 1930's is hardly imaginable today. Yet some of Mrs. Bridge's manners—of an upper-middle-class woman in Kansas City—are not quite extinct. Probably this is what Edith Wharton meant when in *The Age of Innocence* she wrote that in 1900 the society and the customs of Old New York were almost entirely gone, but there remained an aroma of its erstwhile manners.

Yet our problem, when writing about manners, is not only the passage of time. It is that manners, by and large, are national, even more than they are social. Many habits of social ritual and intercourse—including such courtesies as "monsieur," "madame," "mademoiselle"—filtered down from the French aristocracy to the peasantry, and became national; and in communist Poland high party functionaries find it necessary and proper to bow and kiss the hands of women. But the very composition of the American nation has changed drastically since the 1830's, when Tocqueville found it best to describe them as "Anglo-Americans." He was already aware of the differences between English and American manners, contrasting them and often preferring American manners to the English. Yet 150 years later, fewer than one out of six Americans are of English or Welsh or Scottish ancestry. How strong, or lasting, is their inheritance? What has happened to those "Anglo-American" manners? What has remained constant in American manners? Can we speak of *American* manners at all?

In Edmund Burke's great speech "On Conciliation with the American Colonies" (1775), he warned the English against identifying America "with stories of savage men, and uncouth manners." In America as in other places, manners must rest (as Goethe realized) on a moral foundation. But the rigid observance of certain manners in early America that impressed Tocqueville cannot be ascribed to American puritanism: for that strictness—very much including the respect paid to women, and gentlemanly behavior in general—was as strong in the American South as in New England. Indeed, it may be argued that the manners of the South have been better than those of the North.

How can we square this with Goethe? Many people in

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the South saw slavery as an unalterable fact of life, while they also knew that it was immoral. This partly explains the unique relationship certain families and their slaves had in the South — relationships that had no parallel in the English or Spanish or French colonies. Unlike in the North, the relationship between whites and blacks in the South has often been human rather than legal: and that was a matter of manners, too, since it is the nature of manners that they are not legal but human. At any rate, American Southern manners were, and still are, more than merely superficial. Reading Mrs. Chestnut's Civil War diaries we are aware of something that is more than beautifully archaic — a code of behavior that impresses us more than the smell of an old lavender sachet left in a cupboard; we are struck by the pervasive sense of a strong-minded refinement that is infinitely preferable to — and more impressive than — the kind of refinement that is the result of anxious circumspection. Her manners are American manners at their best.

During the 19th century, and well after, all the conservative critics of the march of democracy as well as the radical agitators for equality overlooked an essential matter. That was the desire for respectability: an urge that is at times inseparable from the desire for equality, but almost always the stronger of the two. The desire for respectability explains many things — including the essential conservatism of the American working classes, and perhaps especially of their women. More than a century after Goethe we may observe the moral concerns of different American classes, as expressed in their driving habits: when two American working-class couples ride in a car, the husbands sit in front and the wives in the back; the middle-class habit puts one of the couples in the front seat, the other in the back; the upper-class custom is to seat the couples separately, as at their dinner parties — an illustration of how a certain rigidity of manners is not a monopoly of the upper classes in America.

The desire for respectability also explains the strong tendency to conform among the superficially unruly American masses (something that Tocqueville noticed). It certainly explains the American obsession with manners, which came as early as a century and a half ago, and its particular manifestations in the wild pioneer West. Between 1830 and 1860 dozens of handbooks about etiquette were published in the United States. Many of them were long-lasting bestsellers, including *The Dime Book of Practical Etiquette*, *The Bazaar Book of Decorum*, *How to Behave: A Pocket Manual of Republican Etiquette*, and *Etiquette, Or A Guide to the Usages of Society*, composed by "Count Alfred d'Orsay" (his real name was Charles William Day), which sold thousands of copies in the far West.

The notion that good manners were the prerogatives of the East died slowly. In Frank Crowninshield's *Manners for the Metropolis* (1909), all the nouveaux riche were still Westerners, with an excess of money and bad manners. (Among other things, Crowninshield warns, such men are prone to address their wives as "mother.") In the East a forerunner of the *Social Register* — that American Almanach de Gotha — was published as early as 1844.

At the same time the truest recorders of society, the first serious American novelists, did not write about manners at all. While in Europe most of the great novels of the 19th century were novels of manners, the American equivalents did not appear until Henry James and Edith Wharton wrote them, and established a tradition that has continued through to the present day. *The Great Gatsby*, for example, is a novel of manners, however its commentators may have inflated it into *the* American tragedy; and, more than 60 years later, so is Tom Wolfe's recent *The Bonfire of the Vanities* (a crude attempt at a novel of manners at a time when, for Wolfe, the most significant details worth recording of an urban society in crisis are precise descriptions of the clothing and the footwear of men and women of different races and classes).

The American character — and this was true long before the predominance of "Anglo-Americans" began to diminish — is a complicated one. Contrary to the generally accepted assumption (especially in Europe), Americans are not a simple people. Nor are American manners simple. One of the problems is the American confusion of publicity and privacy. It is because of the invasion of the former into the domains of the latter that in many places and in many ways celebrity has replaced society in America; it is therefore also one of the remnant habits of the old American upper class to observe and respect privacy. We have heard much about how the American West has been marked by the cult of individualism. But that half-truth is somewhat diminished when we observe how that individualism did not, and does not, include the cult of privacy. Both Mrs. Trollope and Tocqueville noticed this. Mrs. Trollope: "No one dreams of fastening a door in Western America; I was told that it would be considered an affront by the whole neighborhood. I was thus exposed to perpetual, and most vexatious, interruptions from people whom I have often never seen, and whose names still oftener were unknown to me." Tocqueville about bores in America: ". . . in the United States it is not at all easy to make a man understand that his presence is unwelcome. To make that point, roundabout methods are by no means always enough . . . " Ranging from American statecraft through the American economy (consider our tax laws, according to which advertising and publicity are expenses of production) to American manners, the ravages of a preoccupation with "public relations" have been enormous. A preoccupation with one's public image is almost always a sign of unsureness, or at least of a kind of self-consciousness that is different from good manners.

Yet I repeat: the American people are not simple. Consider the contradictory and alternating pull between public ritual and private anarchy, between conformism and individualism, so typical of the American spirit and mind; and then consider, too, how these opposite tendencies coexist not only within the great spaces of this country but within the minds of the same men. There is the example of Thoreau: "The obligation I have the right to assume is to do at any time what I think right." (This was written more than a century before the inane slogan, "Do your own thing.") Thoreau was suspicious of both the majority *and* manners — without recognizing that one of the functions of a decent minority is its adoption of some type of civility, that is, of manners. He spoke out against every kind of public pressure and discipline; yet he was a gentle and private man whose prose style was highly disciplined. Less attractive examples of the coexistence of individualism with conformism were

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evident throughout the 1960's, when hundreds of thousands of young Americans, celebrating their individualism, converged in such places as Woodstock; young people who, in Belloc's words,

> . . . take their manners from the Ape
> Their habits from the Bear,
> Indulge the loud unseemly jape,
> And never brush their hair
> —*The Bad Child's Book of Beasts*

The title of Belloc's book is telling, since an enduring problem with American manners is the result of the American cult of youth. Good manners are the fruit of a kind of moral discipline, or of a maturation of mind; hence the cult of youth holds little promise for good manners. No use to blame that on the 1960's; many people had observed its perils earlier. Youth is competitive rather than tolerant (Louis Kronenberger in *Company Manners*, 1954: "The key slogan is no longer 'playing the game,' it is 'knowing the score.'") Young minds are imitative rather than original, which explains the obsession of young people with prevalent fashions. But fashions and manners, like appearance and behavior, are not the same things. Neither are the eccentric and the weirdo. What we need is more of the former and fewer of the latter. Young people are seldom capable of discriminating between them: but a well-mannered society will allow opportunities for the enjoyment of eccentric interests and embellishments of civilized life.

Because of the cult of youth, we can find at least one constant in the history of American manners: American children, by and large, are among the worst behaved in the world. They, wrote Nicolson in 1955, "are accorded a licence without bond or bound . . . . The pert, pampered, and loud-voiced infants of the great Republic are [for us] . . . incomprehensible." One reason for that condition is the hesitation of a democratic people to assert authority. This tendency confuses the young, and obscures an essential condition of their psyche: not only do young people *need* a certain kind of authority, but they *want it*, too. In the evolution—or in this case, the devolution—of American manners, the cult of youth reverses the natural order, according to which young people eventually adopt the manners of older people. An example of such a reversal is the recent habit whereby people unknown to each other will instantly call each other by their first names. At first this habit seems to be yet another extension of the democratization of manners, of American friendliness, and the desire to put people at ease. But the result is yet another illustration of the human mistake of pushing a thing to its extreme, so that it becomes its very opposite. For calling a hardly-known person by his first name not only reduces the respect due to him; it is also a drastic reduction of a personal individuality that is embedded in one's family name.

This is yet another example of our contemporary paradox: the breakdown of authentic communication at a time some silly people are trumpeting "the communications explosion." What this means is the decay of listening, which is a serious matter. When a man curses someone, he is at least aware of that person's existence. But when he does not listen to someone he has, for all practical purposes, excluded him from the human race and from this world. One hundred years ago Americans were able and willing to listen—considering the length of the sermons of their pastors and politicians, one would say for unconscionable lengths of time. One hundred years later the drastic shrinking of the American attention-span has resulted in (rather than caused) the inability or the unwillingness of an increasing number of people, brought up in the television age, to listen.

Listening is not merely a good habit that makes conversa-

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- Schedule of Events -

Friday, November 11

12:00-2:00 pm Registration

2:00 pm Introductory Remarks:
Herbert I. London, *Chairman, N.A.S.*
Stephen H. Balch, *President, N.A.S.*

2:30-5:00 pm Panel: **"Academic Freedom, Intellectual Tolerance, and the New Orthodoxies"**
Participants:
John H. Bunzel, *Hoover Institution*
Leslie Lenkowsky, *Institute for Educational Affairs*
Alan C. Kors, *University of Pennsylvania*
Barry R. Gross, *York College, CUNY (Moderator)*

5:00-6:30 pm Reception for Fellows, Members and Guests

7:00-9:00 pm N.A.S. Business Dinner

Saturday, November 12

8:30-9:30 am Registration

9:30 am-Noon Panel: **"The Transformation of Academic Culture, 1964 - 1988"**
Participants:
Paul Hollander, *University of Massachusetts*
Stanley Rothman, *Smith College*
Aaron B. Wildavsky, *University of California*
Jeffrey Paul, *Social Philosophy and Policy Center, Bowling Green State University*
Margarita R. Levin, *Yeshiva University (Moderator)*

12:30-2:00 pm Banquet Luncheon
Address: **John R. Silber**, *President, Boston University*

2:30-5:00 pm Panel: **"Does the Curriculum Have a Core?"**
Participants:
Walter Berns, *American Enterprise Institute*
Chester E. Finn, Jr., *Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Education*
Peter Shaw, *SUNY, Stony Brook, Emeritus (Moderator)*
J. Rufus Fears, *Boston University*
Thomas L. Short, *Kenyon College*

5:30-7:30 pm Round-tables

Sunday, November 13

8:00-9:00 am Registration

9:00-10:00 am Address: **The Honorable Jeane J. Kirkpatrick**
Introduction: **Irving Louis Horowitz**

10:00-12:30 pm Panel: **"The Politicization of the Disciplines"**
Participants:
Oscar Handlin, *Harvard University*
James W. Tuttleton, *New York University*
Irving Louis Horowitz, *Rutgers University*
Carol Iannone, *New York University (Moderator)*

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tion possible, profitable and, on occasion, pleasant. It means paying attention to other people, which is surely a moral good but also the essence of good manners. We have at present a president of the United States who shows many signs of being good-natured; but he is also inattentive. He may be the best-dressed president of the United States ever, but his manners do not compare with those of the sometimes indifferently clad and ungainly Lincoln. We have reached a stage in our imperial development where the staffs, the cooks, the decorators, the planners, the social directors of the White House incorporate a ceremonial organization that surpasses that of Versailles at the time of Louis XIV; yet I read that at a state dinner in the White House Madame Chirac, the wife of the prime minister of France, was placed next to Joe Paterno, the football coach of Penn State. (We may be permitted to speculate about the ease of their conversation.) In December 1987, before the state dinner held for the Gorbachevs, they advised the Reagans that they did not wish to wear black tie and long dress. Yet the president prescribed a black-tie dinner, the explanation of a White House spokesman being that for such an occasion people "like to be dressed up." One would think that elementary good manners (as well as protocol) would put the wishes of the principal guest first; evidently this is not the case.

Are we witnesses not only of a decline but of a degeneration of manners, at the mercy of a rising tide of barbarism, marking the beginning of a new Dark Age? Yes: and no. Again we may face one of the great American paradoxes. While the political and social ideologies of the 1960's have largely disappeared, many of the fashions and manners have not. For at least a century after 1776 Americans represented the most radical democracy in the world—at a time when their manners were often conservative and rigid. In our times more Americans identify themselves as conservatives than as liberals—while their manners are often loose and even radical. It certainly suggests that they are not as conservative as they think they are.

But in one important sense Americans *have* become more conservative, and therein lies a symptom of promise. This symptom is the increasing respect they have for the past. However deficient their present knowledge of history, however sorry the degeneration of history-teaching in our schools and colleges and, yes, universities, there has risen among the American people an appetite for the past that has no precedent in the nation's 200 years.

"The favorite, the constant, the universal sneer that met me everywhere, was on our old-fashioned attachment to things obsolete," wrote Mrs. Trollope. Exactly 100 years later the fine Philadelphian essayist Cornelius Weygandt, writing about American manners, said, among other things: "We, as a people, postulate change as always desirable. If a thing is not 'modern' or 'up-to-date,' we cry 'out with it.'" Americans are still "under the influence of that shibboleth, 'It isn't good if it isn't modern.'" In the 1920's, when the word "modern" in England still had a double edge, suggesting something fast and faintly amoral, in America a "modern" girl was an all-American girl, and it was the word "old-fashioned" which on occasion carried a pejorative tinge: an "old-fashioned" young man was something of a sissy. How this has changed! By the superficially radical and "revolutionary" 1960's, "modern" had begun to sink on the stock exchange of words, while "old-fashioned" rose—until now, in the United States even more than in Europe, an old-fashioned house may be worth twice as much as a modern house, most Americans favor an old-fashioned place to a modern one and, I believe, would prefer that their children or their siblings marry someone from an old-fashioned family, rather than a "modern" one.

It is, of course, possible that this national interest and affection for the past is mostly sentimental. But I think that there is more to it. It is certainly true that, unlike in Mrs. Trollope's times, Americans prefer old-fashioned manners to "modern" or even "up-to-date" ones. A corresponding development may be garnered from the slangy use of the word "class" in our times, when so many of the older class distinctions have otherwise disappeared. Again it was Tocqueville who saw that there *were* subtle differences in this seemingly classless democracy: "At first sight one might be inclined to say that the manners of all Americans are exactly alike, and it is only on close inspection that one sees all the variations among them." But as late as the 1930's the now current phrase, "he has class," did not figure in H.L. Mencken's encyclopedic *The American Language*. Indeed, to such men as Mencken or Frank Crowninshield (a then-arbiter of New York society and its manners) there was something ridiculous and unmannerly in employing the word "class" in America. Yet 50 years later the phrase, "he [or she] has class," has come to suggest manners even more than fashions: it does not refer merely to style, but to generosity and perhaps even to magnanimity. It includes at least a sense, if not a recognition, that good manners may differ from the customary behavior of the majority. What is badly needed in this country is a *moral minority* (rather than the self-satisfied assertion of a Moral Majority).

It was an Englishman who said that a gentleman is someone who does not offend others unintentionally; yet the rudeness of Englishmen (which, true, is often the result of a deep-seated shyness) has never been typical of Americans, not even when most of them were descendants of people from the British Isles. Americans, Tocqueville wrote, are "always cold in manner"—this is no longer true—"and sometimes coarse; but they are hardly ever insensitive." The combination of social cruelty with exquisite manners, practiced on occasion by many of the European aristocracies and here and there prevalent even now in France and England, has never taken root in America. That democratic generosity—what F. Scott Fitzgerald once called "the willingness of the heart"—was, and remains, the essential ingredient of the goodness of American manners. This happens when these manners are the fruits of a true consideration for others. In spite of the greatly changed composition of the American people, this has not changed through the centuries. It does not happen often in this mass democratic age, but when American manners are good, they are among the best in the world. When that "willingness of the heart" has grown into something that is not merely enthusiastic and instinctive, when it is manifest in the attention paid to others, the willingness of the American heart becomes inseparable from the willingness of the American mind.

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THE IRON ROD OF AMERICAN 'LIBERALISM'

by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn

In America, as in Britain, institutions, movements, political phenomena, historic events and geographic features have been given names and labels that bewilder and startle the rest of the world: the German "Westwall" of World War II became the "Siegfried Line" (in World War I that lay in northern France), the Near East became the Middle East (where, now, is the Near East?), and Santa Claus, a Spanish-Dutch moniker wrongly gendered, has nothing to do with Christmas (he is the Cappadocian Bishop St. Nicholas whose feast is on December 6). Or take the terms "humanism," "humanist," and "humanistic" with their very precise historic connotations: generally they were applied to those 15th- and early 16th-century Catholic thinkers who, without forgetting God, made man a central object of their scrutiny, following the traditions of newly discovered antiquity. Outside America and Britain the term "conservative" applies to thinkers like Maistre, Stahl, Disraeli, Kuypers, or Donoso Cortes, but if I were to call Adam Smith, Tocqueville, or Mises conservative, I would be advised to see a doctor.

The process of mislabeling has also affected the term "liberalism." What is called "liberalism" in the United States (and increasingly in Britain) would never be recognized as such in the rest of the world — neither in Japan, nor in Latin America, nor in Western or Eastern Europe, nor even in Australia, where the Liberal Party is distinctly right of center.

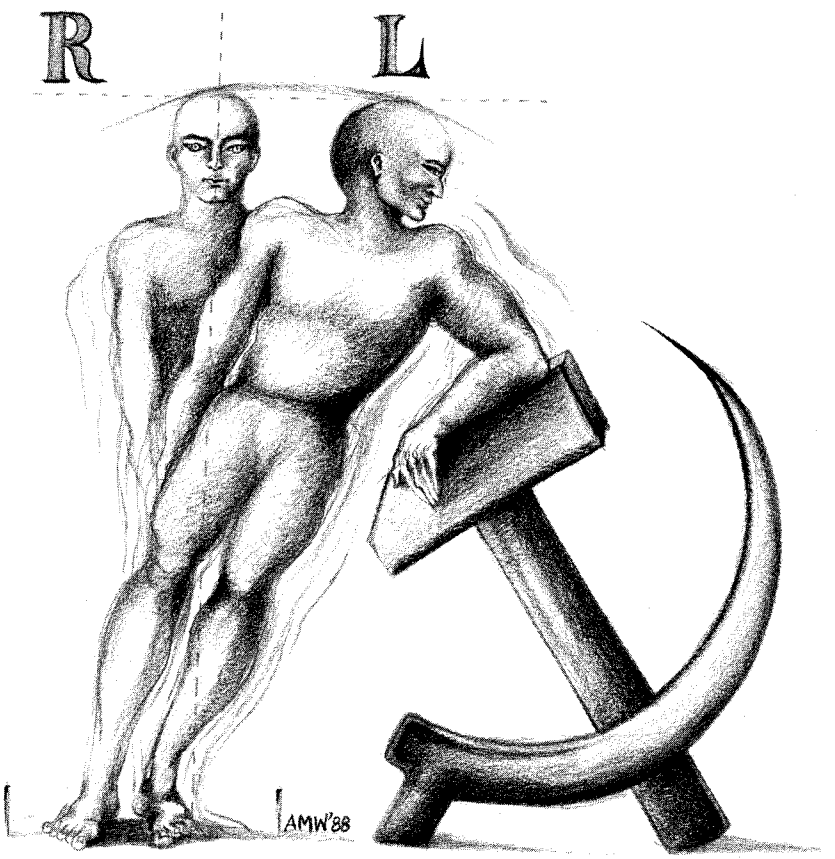
What, then, is liberalism in reality, and what meaning did it assume in North America? How and why did this unfortunate change take place, allowing "what passes in America, for reasons of political expedience, by the name of liberalism" (Whittaker Chambers in *Cold Friday*) to assume that noble name?

There are, of course, several *genuine* liberalisms, their uniting bond being the quest for personal liberty. They can be divided into four categories: 1) Pre-liberalism, 2) Early Liberalism, 3) Old, or Paleoliberalism, and 4) New, or Neoliberalism. In time they overlap: Adam Smith, who died in 1790, is a Pre-liberal because the Spaniards used the term only after 1812 for the supporters of the Constitution of Cádiz, whom they called *los Serviles*. Southey used the term in 1816 ("our British liberales") in its Spanish form, and Sir Walter Scott wrote about *libéraux*. Actually, the Early Liberals were largely aristocrats, from Tocqueville and Montalembert to Lord Acton, and they included Jacob Burckhardt and his nephew Johann Bachofen, both Swiss patricians. (When the elitist, liberal Mont Pèlerin Society was founded, the originators wanted to call it the Tocqueville-Acton Society, whereupon Professor Knight of Chicago University announced that he would quit if the society were named after "two Roman Catholic aristocrats." An alternative had to be found in a hurry and thus the name of the mountain seen from the windows of the meeting room was adopted.)

The Early Liberals were succeeded by the Old Liberals, who harked back strongly to Adam Smith and showed great interest in economics, but tended toward an anti-Christian bias and philosophic relativism. They disliked dogmas and often failed to understand that only a thinker in absolutes has the chance (but not more than a chance) to be truly tolerant. (The relativist, on the other hand, is not tolerant. He does not "suffer" the views or convictions of others, he can only be indifferent. "I think I am right in my way and you're right in yours, so let's make it 50-50.") Naturally, the Old Liberals frequently clashed with the Catholic Church.

The founders and main luminaries of the "Austrian School" (of economics) were, in principle, Old Liberals and, with the exception of Fritz Machlup, noblemen. On the other hand, the Neoliberals (who seceded from the Mont Pèlerin Society in 1961) tolerated state intervention in certain situations, were opposed to "mammothism," emphasized the consumer's right to choice and were, as a rule, open to Christian inspiration.

All liberalisms were dedicated to freedom and all were



Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn is the European correspondent for National Review.

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either suspicious of or even opposed to democracy, which had been reborn in Europe through the French Revolution. Since democracy stood for the "politicized nation," egalitarianism, and majority rule, for them it inevitably had a close affinity with totalitarianism. Hayek has quoted E. Heymann to the effect that all totalitarian tyrannies claimed to be democratic. While there was a kernel of truth in this, they never dared to claim to be liberal. The bridge between totalitarian sympathies and liberalism was built only by "American liberalism"—that curious brew which, genetically, has a liberal ancestry, but no longer represents liberalism since it in no way belongs to any of the four categories.

Thanks to its character of a* fausse idée claire, *one should not be surprised that Marxism successfully invaded liberalism in America, where anti-intellectualism forms a part of a certain British heritage.

But how did this happen? Liberalism obviously had to treat all ideas with an unprejudiced, open mind, especially if they were "new." Yet what was new to the average American about the New Deal? Already there had been John Dewey's so-called pragmatism, as well as a leftist tradition going back to old English sects (Levellers, Diggers, etc.), plus the notions of Thomas Paine and the older, quasi-socialist tradition of the Wobblies and Transcendentalists. But a powerful new socialist wave rose from Black Friday and the Depression. The Soviet Union palmed itself off to the innocent and the naive as a "worker's paradise."

Windows and doors had been left open in the drafty house of a still-genuine liberalism, and in swept the putative "wave of the future" which, in this case, was not National, but International Socialism. This invasion was made all the easier because Americans cherish the highly "progressive" and "futuristic" vision of a *Novus Ordo Seclorum*. (Remember the great success of Bellamy's *Looking Back: 2000-1887*.) No great wonder, therefore, that a sizable part of the American "liberal" establishment, with its ideologically weak foundation, could be turned around—whereas elsewhere liberalism fought socialism tooth and nail, a good segment (or was it the bulk?) of American "liberals" made a 180-degree turn.

To make everything more confusing, America's genuine liberals surrendered their time-honored appellation to the pinks, called themselves "libertarians," and now frequently hide under the conservative label. In the late 1930's and early 1940's *The American Mercury*, no longer edited by H.L. Mencken but by Eugene Lyons, published a series of "Creeds": the "Creed of a Socialist," of a "Conservative," of a "Reactionary," and *two* "Creeds of a Liberal," one calling himself an "Old Liberal," the other a "New Liberal." It was the latter who testified to the radical turnabout. The evil effects of a philosophical relativism manifested themselves in full force in *The American Mercury*'s series. Here a "liberal" publicly declared himself to be "pink." The critical remark of a wily conservative—that the philosophy of liberalism is to have no philosophy (which applies only to certain types of liberalism)—proved its sordid legitimacy.

Thanks to its character of a *fausse idée claire*, one should not be surprised that Marxism successfully invaded liberalism in America, where anti-intellectualism forms a part of a certain British heritage. Marx based his critique of a free market economy on the same conception as did a certain "libertarian theologian" I met in South America. This man compared the plight of the exploited masses to four men in a prison cell: one a muscular murderer, and the other three puny pickpockets. The big murderer takes half the others' portions and gets steadily fatter and stronger while they wither. But in such a cell there are only four walls, four stomachs and one lavatory—a situation in no way similar to a free economy in a free country. Our rich can only either reinvest their incomes or spend them on goods; either way, the result is added employment. The more, the merrier.

Nevertheless the false but clear ideas of Marxism, which appeal to the desperately poor, the improvident, the envious, and the (naively or charitably) bleeding hearts, are admittedly not the only items in the baggage of an American "liberal." They are also watered down. A "pink" is not the same as a "red." The American "liberal" is, after all, not a man of iron principles, but a mixture of likes and dislikes. He is "broad-minded" and boasts of it, but only *in a certain direction*, that is, toward the left. Though he considers himself a "middle-of-the-roader," he is decidedly left-of-center. The political heritage of an American "liberal," we must bear in mind, does not come from the Founding Fathers, but from the French Revolution and its "democracy" which, in America, replaced one John of Geneva with another—Jean Calvin with Jean Jacques Rousseau, a change that marks the essence of the Great American Tragedy. Hence the indignation of the American "liberal" about the activity of Senator Joseph McCarthy, provoked by genuine and undeniable cases of treason.

The inroads made by a false liberalism had already been observed in England by Samuel Butler when he wrote in 1893: "I am afraid of liberalism or, at any rate, of the people who call themselves liberal. They flirt with radicals who flirt with socialists who flirt with anarchists who do something a deal more than flirt with dynamite." This leftward tendency is, as a rule, combined with the badly camouflaged conviction that the left is on the side of that mythological thing called "progress," and that it will dominate the "shape of things to come." This is one of the reasons why wealthy American "liberals" frequently send their sons and daughters to colleges and universities where half-educated professors teach them to draw the final logical consequences of their parents' view—often to the discomfort of the latter, who console themselves with the thought that their offspring will, after all, have to live in the much redder world of tomorrow.

The declared or concealed Marxism is only a part of the ideological baggage of an American "liberal." There is in him still the vague desire to be on the side of freedom, of "the liberties." Yet this inclination is severely restricted because it means defying the left. The right is generally given "the silent treatment," especially when it presents unanswerable arguments. And thanks to their false but clear

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ideas, the American "liberals" have, within the democratic framework and the commercialized world of the mass media, an almost automatic advantage over more profound thinkers whose ideas are difficult to popularize. American "liberals" keep their antagonists out of the marketplace, and an unholy "liberal" inquisition rules today in America. The unbroken power of American "liberals" is most evident in education, book publishing, the press, and the electronic mass media. They form a true establishment, moved by a specific *ideology*.

But do they really have an ideology? One might argue that since their intellectual and emotional baggage contains contradictions, they follow the old system of having "a philosophy of no philosophy." This is only seemingly the case. They are firmly anthropocentric and "Edenist," an outlook they share with Karl Marx. And this basically optimistic ideology assumes in so many American "liberals" the character of a religion because it *replaces* religion, and is defended with a truly religious fervor. If you take it away from them, they have nothing left. This explains their not so rare fanaticism (*vide* the case of Benjamin Hart who, at Dartmouth, was literally bitten by a "liberal" member of the administration while he distributed a conservative student paper. Hart had to be given tetanus shots). As a rule, however, American "liberals" reject genuine communism of Russian vintage—but with sympathetic regret, because what they really mind about it are its *methods*, not its aims or essence. Face to face with a radical enemy of the "Socialist Fatherland" and all it stands for, especially if he is religious and/or conservative (a Solzhenitsyn, for instance), the "liberal" will indignantly oppose him . . . just as he would side with Henry Dexter White against Joe McCarthy, with Alger Hiss against Whittaker Chambers, or with the red ANC assassins (who burn their adversaries alive) against the forces of a peaceful evolution in South Africa.

In the realm of American internal affairs, American "liberalism" makes its ideology a strong and often decisive factor. As everywhere in the Western world, there are parties in the United States which can be either "Santa Claus" or "tighten-your-belt" parties. The former, as a rule (and quite naturally), are of the left, the latter of the right. Needless to say, the Santa Claus parties, since they bring gifts, soothe envies, and appeal to bleeding hearts, have an enormous advantage in the voting process. In a sense, they cannot be defeated, though occasionally they commit a sort of temporary suicide with grave political errors or unappealing candidates.

Even if victorious, however, the tighten-your-belt parties usually do not have the courage to undo the evil works of the Santa Clausers—political candidates rarely have anything but their reelection in mind. Thus the buying of votes never ends. If I stand within 20 yards of a polling booth and offer hundreds of dollars in cash to anybody who votes for me, I would, in most countries, be arrested. But if I get onto a soap box and promise a thousand dollars of state revenue a month to each person with black hair and blue eyes, there would be no objections. Votes are always for sale.

Parliamentarism cannot be corrupted because, owing to its "largesses" (of which John Adams was so suspicious), it *is* corruption. Therefore American "liberalism" fits extremely well into such a scene. It is the creed of do-gooders, advocates of the Provider State (wrongly called the Welfare State), of the disinherited, the sexual deviates, the "minorities" (but only those at the bottom of the social scale), the improvident, drug addicts, dropouts, et al. As one author said, American "liberals" are frequently "advantaged idealists"—lucky people in the upper classes who, rightly or wrongly, suffer from a bad conscience. Hence the statistically verifiable phenomenon that in the United States the percentage of self-professed "liberals" *mounts* with their income. Intellectually this is not surprising, since simple people often have sound intuitions, whereas further up one finds the half-educated. A truly high degree of knowledge and wisdom pertains to such a microscopic group that it will not figure in overall statistics.

American "liberals" frequently assume a Christian stance of extreme altruism, confusing justice with equality. But where human life is concerned they suffer from inner contradictions deriving from the two sources of their ideology: a degenerate liberalism, and Marxism. They protest against the execution of guilty criminals, but promote the massacre of the innocent unborn. Yet we should not be led astray by the contradictions in their ideology, because there always remains a guiding line: the belief in an all but automatic "progress" (which, to be sure, has to be helped along by all sorts of trickery) and the conviction that man, basically so good and clever, can establish Paradise on Earth . . . either in unspecified freedom or through a gigantic bureaucratic machinery.

Most fatal of all, however, is the effect of American "liberalism" on foreign policy, where it has served to propagandize not so much the ideas of 1776 as the alien ideology of 1789. Whereas the democrats of 1917 and 1919 prepared the field for World War II, the pseudo-liberals after 1945 did everything in their power to see that World War III can cast its shadow over all of us. The satanic urge for suicide and destruction? Not necessarily. Vauvenargues has warned us that the usual excuse of the real malefactors in this world is that they want to do good. In our fundamentally irrational age, we probably have to fear the infernal power of ferocious stupidity more than ordinary wickedness.

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DIGGING FOR THE TRUTH IN *PRAVDA*

by Leon Steinmetz

I confess—I know Russian. This ability has been causing me a lot of irritation lately. I have been bombarded with questions from people who don't know the language, about what is *really* going on in Moscow now. In my answers, in order to be absolutely unbiased, I always rely on "pravda." I mean not just the Russian word which implies "truth"; I am also talking about *Pravda*, the major organ of the Communist Party's Central Committee. Because from *Pravda*, much more than from any other Soviet publication, can one deduce the tone of the current internal debates, and decipher the real meaning of the dispatches sent by the Party to all segments of the society, from an impoverished *kolkhoz* to the strategic naval force.

I usually only glance through *Pravda* (and even that I do rarely), but after the Reagan-Gorbachev summit in December 1987, I was curious enough to take an issue of the paper and examine it thoroughly. Several months later, I repeated the procedure, and this is the result of my impressions.

* * *

Compared to, say, a major American daily, which can break your leg if you drop it, *Pravda* is very meager—it has just six or occasionally eight pages. The front page is devoted mainly to domestic affairs and to the leading editorial, a broad Politburo directive of the day.

In the December 1987 issue, the editorial called for the Communists to be at the avant-garde of the struggle for more effective management of *kolkhozes* and factories. Directly beneath it was a large photograph of a middle-aged man in a three-piece suit with medals, standing next to a lathe, explaining something to a young machinist dressed in overalls. "A Dedicated Communist and a Hero of Socialist Labor, Machinist Grishin Shares His Experience," the caption said. Also on the front page were a number of short reports from different regions of the country, some praising, some critical: milk quotas had been fulfilled in Kirghizia, but four million mole pelts were rotting in a warehouse in Vologda; transport workers were doing a good job in Yakutia, but furniture manufacturers in Georgia were making shaky stools. One item voiced the complaints of a provincial Party official about the inadequate number of propagandists who could explain the nature of *glasnost* to people in the provinces, while another informed the Soviet reader of the creation in Moscow—in the spirit of the new friendship—of a joint Soviet-American commission to study the problem of dancing.

The front page of the current *Pravda* is almost the same, except that instead of one photo of a Hero of Socialist Labor

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there are three—of a woman plasterer, a steelworker, and a combine-operator—and the short reports from the provinces are a bit more critical: yes, the coal miners of Pavlodar fulfilled their work quotas, and the *kolkhozniks* of Zaporozhye exported watermelons to Poland, but the locker rooms in an elementary school were painted badly and a nurse was rude to an elderly patient.

However, while there is no *significant* difference between the December 1987 and the present issues of *Pravda*, an unbiased observer has to admit that some change *is* noticeable. There are now more reports denouncing *apparatchiks* and blaming them for the country's ills than there were before. But the West should not get too excited. As has happened so many times in the past, once again the blame is placed squarely on *individuals* (Stalin, Brezhnev, Chernenko, or some middle-level provincial party hacks). In all these reports, there is not even a hint that maybe there is something wrong with the fundamentals—Marx's teachings or Lenin's methods—and there is no attempt to look honestly at the *communist system*. On the contrary, *Pravda*'s current leitmotif is a nostalgia for "True Leninism."

This is why Gorbachev's *perestroika* is so different *in principle* from what went on in Hungary in 1956, or in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Those were honest attempts either to alter the system substantially, as in Prague, or toss it out entirely, as in Budapest.

Not so in Moscow.

As Robert Novak has observed, what is now happening in Moscow is not a process of genuine *democratization* (which according to even the latest Amnesty International report is *not* taking place), but a desperate attempt at *modernization*—a backward 19th-century police state trying to transform itself into an efficient 21st-century police state.

After Brezhnev's death, the Soviet economy found itself in a precarious condition. To survive as a modern state and not slide down to the level of, say, Ghana, the Soviet Union had to do something quickly. If we use as a metaphor for Brezhnev's Soviet Union people in rags polishing tanks, then it simply became apparent to the younger Politburo generation that to polish the tanks efficiently one needs modern polishing equipment (thus the renewed passes to the West), and that people in rags should, from time to time, be given at least a new pair of galoshes, or they will turn in an extremely inadequate performance. (Thus the slight relaxation in the stranglehold over the economy and the censorship of literature.)

* * *

Pravda is a peculiar paper. In order to get important information, one has to read between the lines. A brief piece in the December 1987 issue was revealing. Unobtrusively tucked away in the corner of the page, it informed the reader of a Politburo meeting on Soviet foreign policy held shortly after Gorbachev's return from the Washington summit.

Squeezed between praises for his achievements in the US and salutes to his performance at the Warsaw Pact Conference which followed, was a half-sentence about the Politburo decision to modernize the entire Soviet railroad system. Why was such a purely *domestic* policy project included in so important a *foreign* policy meeting, and why was a project of this magnitude given such scanty treatment in *Pravda*? Could it be that the Politburo, immediately after signing one missile treaty, and with another in the works (with all the verification provisions), had adopted its rarely-mentioned project of constantly moving missiles around on railroad tracks to make them undetectable? Understandably, comrade-members would not be eager to overpublicize that.

They didn't mind, though, overpublicizing the successful pencil production in Syktyvkar, or the conference in Moscow in which participants gave speeches with titles like: "Measures to Accelerate Augmentation of the Country's Food Resources on the Basis of Developing Agro-Industrial Integration and Cooperation and Converting Enterprises to Full Economic Accountability and Self-Financiation."

* * *

Since the parallels between Afghanistan and Vietnam are brought up so often by the American press, it is interesting to see how *Pravda* treats the Afghanistan issue. Well, it treats it, plain and simple, as a *non*issue. There is an occasional upbeat report about the Red Army's brotherly help to the Afghan peasants fighting feudal-capitalist bandits, or a dull editorial on the blossoming cooperation between the two communist countries.

Once in a while, one can spot something significant. The December 1987 *Pravda* informed its readers about the Central Committee's plan to "develop direct links between the regions and districts of Afghanistan with the regions and districts of the Soviet Union," including common water and energy supplies and interchange of party cadres. This casually reported plan amounted to nothing less than an attempt to absorb Afghanistan *physically* into the Soviet Union.

This was, of course, several months ago. An article in the current issue, entitled "An Uneasy Road to Peace," is about the throng of refugees coming back from Pakistan, the "Peace Hotels" built for them by the Communist government, and the beloved leader Najibullah greeting his returning brethren. The tone of this article remarkably resembles that of a *Pravda* piece written after the Chernobyl disaster. In a feat of creative journalism, its author described the people of Chernobyl returning to their homes; he wrote of the beautiful sunsets, of the young lovers walking hand in hand along the river bank, and of the nightingales.

* * *

Well, if Afghanistan is a nonissue, there is always a thoughtful essay in the paper about something important. In December 1987, such an essay discussed Soviet youth. The author admitted (in the true spirit of *glasnost*) that Soviet youth are no longer a monolithic group: of course, there are many who are dedicated Komsomol members committed to the party and the state, but there are also those who are much less committed, who admire unapproved writers, organize unauthorized shows and concerts, thus putting their "egotistical impulses" above their duty to the state; and, finally, there are some who don't give a damn about the Soviet state and its goals, embracing instead such despicable philosophies as Nazism and mysticism.

The author—a distinguished pedagogue—conceded the problems and put forward an ingenious idea. What

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Some Epigrams

by Fred Chappell

Malgré Lui

Jerry earns his bread writing polemics
Against the footnote race of academics.
Pompous, he calls them, *ineffectual*
Officious pedants, and so forth. Why
Does he so complain and vilify?
—Don't breathe this secret to a living soul:
Jerry's a latent intellectual.

Agriculture

You've planted seven wealthy husbands
While the bodies were still warm.
You own, Chloe, what I'd call
A profit-making farm.

Televangelist

He claims that he'll reign equally
With Jesus in eternity.
But it's not like him to be willing
To give a partner equal billing.

The Epigramatist

Mankind perishes. The world goes dark.
He racks his brains for a tart remark.

Soviet youth need now, he suggested, is . . . parachute towers. Before World War II there was at least one such tower in every town; now they are few and far between. He went on to tell of a young man whose "decadent" life-style changed drastically after he signed up with an amateur parachute-jumping group.

The essays in the current *Pravda* range from one about a successful Soviet émigré artist now living in New York, who has suddenly (or maybe not so suddenly?) become a frenzied Soviet patriot, to one on Hungary with a very meaningful passage which called the patriotic Hungarian premier Imre Nagy—hanged by the Soviets in 1956—a right-wing extremist. The essay's message is transparently clear: don't make a grave mistake, comrades, Gorbachev's *perestroika* in Moscow is *very* different from the one attempted in Budapest in 1956.

* * *

Meager as it is, *Pravda* doesn't allocate much space to news from abroad. Called "international information," such news is usually strewn across pages four and five and divided into two sections—news from the brotherly (communist) countries, and reports from the enemy (capitalist) camp, with an occasional piece on the Third World, such as a laudatory article on the life of Indira Gandhi. In the way news from abroad is presented—what is omitted, emphasized, or distorted—I detected absolutely *no* change from December 1987 to the present. The nature of the reports on the enemy camp is encapsulated in a Soviet joke about two old women standing in a kerosene line. "I can't bear it any longer, waiting for three hours to buy a gallon of kerosene!" one says. "Yes, but still, we're lucky," the other responds, "at least our government supplies us with the kerosene. Who does it for the people in the capitalist countries?"

The objective of the articles on, say, joblessness in Rome, or drug wars in Munich, or terrorist rampages in Paris, is to convince the Soviet people that no matter how hard their life might be, life in the West is incomparably worse. These longer pieces are intertwined with shorter ones bashing the usual rotten pack—South Korea, South Africa, Paraguay, Chile, and Israel—or vehemently defending the great Panamanian patriot Noriega against American warmongers.

The articles on the brotherly camp are less emotionally charged. Among the reports on a new cow-milking technology developed in East Germany, a Soviet-Bulgarian collaboration on porcelain making, a new subway extension in Budapest, and a Soviet opera production in Havana, there is a piece on the exhibition in Beijing of Soviet holograms, depicting, in three dimensions, Lenin's personal belongings. This last report has better positioning than the others, signaling Gorbachev's present priority of renewing brotherly relations with Beijing.

"Brotherly relations" and new Moscow "peace initiatives" are stock phrases in *Pravda*. Nowhere in its pages can one find reports on the Soviets' latest drastic increase of military pressure on Northern Europeans, particularly Sweden and Norway; or on their recent unprecedented build-up on the Red Sea islands of Perim, Dhalak Kabir, and Socotra off Southern Yemen, with more than 40,000 Soviet troops deployed there; or on a transformation of Da Nang airfield and Cam Ranh Bay naval base in Vietnam into probably the two largest Soviet military facilities abroad; or on the current astonishing number of mishaps with different kinds of American missiles, as well as the *Challenger* (mishaps which SDI Head Lt. General Daniel Graham characterized as having one chance in a million of being coincidences); or on a chain of mysterious deaths—in plane and car crashes and assassinations—of numerous European scientists associated with SDI research. If General Graham's observation is correct, we might presume that under *glasnost* the KGB first chief directorate responsible for external operations is anything but pulling back.

A friend of mine, a scientist from Moscow now living in the West, put it quite succinctly. "You know," he said, "it might sound paradoxical, but living *in* the Soviet Union, I didn't fully comprehend the beast it is. In a way, it was like living inside a tiger's belly—it stank awfully, you couldn't move, but you didn't see the teeth. Now I am outside, and I can see them all; I can see the whole beast." Reading Pravda I can, too.

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Crackers & Roundheads *by Clyde Wilson*

The Celt in all his variants from Builth to Ballyhoo,
His mental processes are plain—one knows what he will do,
And can logically predicate his finish by his start.

—Kipling

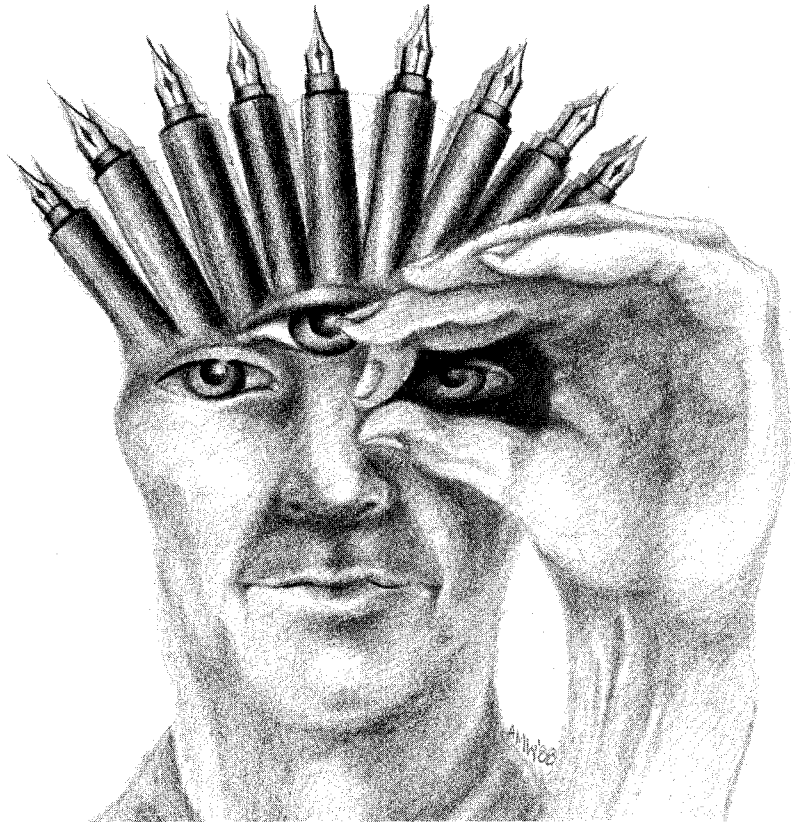
Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South **by Grady McWhiney, Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press.**

Despite all that has passed since, the Civil War is still at the center of American history. No one has ever doubted this in the South, where every native is a not-too-remote descendant of Confederate soldiers, or of slaves. In my native state (North Carolina) and my adopted state (South Carolina) the Civil War killed a quarter of the white men. There is nothing even remotely approaching this degree of sacrifice and devastation anywhere else in the American experience.

The late great Unpleasantness is not so direct a memory north of the Potomac and the Ohio, not to mention west of the Missouri. (In fact, one gets the impression that Pancho Villa, Trotsky, Gandhi, and Patrice Lumumba are more remembered and honored up there than Grant and the boys in blue. I hope not, but I fear so.) Nevertheless, the Civil War remains the critical core of American experience, not only because of its immense scale and revolutionary impact, but because it is the Gordian knot of our history.

The Civil War presents all of the major issues and fundamental conflicts of America in their starkest form: the meaning of the Constitution; the nature of majority rule and consensus; the benefits and burdens of industrialization, modernization, and centralization; governmental authority versus individual liberty; the claims of innovation and tradition, social ideals and social reality; the position of the black minority in American society. (It even molds our international role, because every subsequent war and extraterritorial objective of the US has been defined psychically and rhetorically in imitation of the winning side in the Civil War.)

And despite the convention among ignorant and unthinking commentators that the war represented a simple struggle of good (freedom and Union) against evil (slavery and disunion), it does not present these issues in any conveniently simplistic manner. It presents them instead in tremendously complicated and ambivalent ways, which is why that experience will always remain of the most compelling interest to any American capable of historical imagination and understanding. (For instance, was Lincoln a liberator or a tyrant? Or possibly both? Was the South fighting for freedom or for slavery? Or possibly both? What relative proportions did benevolence, racism, and economic self-interest have in the opposition to slavery? Was John Brown a heroic revolutionary, a dangerous subversive, or merely a mental case? The



Clyde Wilson is descended from long lines of Scotch-Irishmen on both sides.

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questions are without end.)

In the earliest postwar period, when it could be simply declared that the war was a crusade to suppress wickedness, understanding was not much of a problem. As time passed, as the world became more complicated, as the ambiguities of victory and progress became more apparent to the thoughtful, and as more was learned about the sheer complexity of the war, this would not do.

Then for a long time the question of the cause or causes of the Civil War fascinated historians. Unfortunately, posing the blank question of "why" was bound to lead to abstraction, bad reasoning, and artificial disputes. In history, as in every other field of human knowledge, finding the right answers is far less important and difficult than asking the right questions. (My friend Ludwell Johnson, a Civil War historian, has written how it came home to him that we historians were on the wrong track some years ago, when, to the standard essay exam question "Why the Civil War?" a student returned the philosophically flawless answer, "Why not?")

Such analytical dead ends suggest that the old-style history, which attempted to tell a story or to describe a past era, teaches us more than any amount of abstraction over "causes." History is not an expression of abstract laws, or the record of progress. It is a description of the actions of men, of *life*, which in turn is an expression of the (partly unknowable) mind of God. A historian who does an honest and competent job of narrative or description has created something permanently useful to everyone, whether they agree with him or not. The historian who claims to have found the final explanation is a fraud.

You and I may agree in our description of a historical phenomenon or epoch, but disagree in values, as to whether we like or not what we have described, or whether we regard it as good or bad. On the other hand, you and I may be in complete agreement in values but disagree in the proper description and import of a historical phenomenon or period. We may agree that the New Deal was not really very revolutionary. I may be glad of the fact, and you may be sorry. Or you may think that it really was revolutionary, when I don't. If we are both honest and competent it does not matter, we will learn from each other. The historian who recognizes and declares his viewpoint up front is much more objective and unbiased than the one who thinks that he is simply purveying the universal truth.

Professor McWhiney of Texas Christian University has produced one of those permanently valuable works of historical description. You may value the distinctiveness of the South, as Professor McWhiney and I do, or you may want it wiped out. Either way, and even if you disagree with his answers, you can respect his accomplishment for its solidity, originality, and contribution to understanding.

In *Cracker Culture* McWhiney makes a quantum leap in understanding the South. He enhances our knowledge of what was at issue and what imperatives fueled the gigantic 19th-century sectional conflict. Thus, by asking some of the right questions, he contributes toward the advance on the big answers. McWhiney's ideas have been gathering momentum for several years in preliminary works, and are here brought into fully developed maturity.

To understand what this book signifies, one has to understand what a cracker is in McWhiney's lexicon. He is not simply, as we used to think, a somewhat benighted native of an area of poor soil in South Georgia and North Florida. A cracker is an American of a particular ethnic heritage: the ethnic descendant of Celtic Britain, transferred to this continent in the 18th century, where he underwent an entrenchment and adaptation in the congenial environment of the American frontier and became a major component of American culture — became, that is, what has been known as the Southerner.

The cracker is in part what we used to understand as a Scotch-Irishman, though one of McWhiney's strengths is that he gives the concept of Celticness in America much greater depth and breadth. The cracker can perhaps be most readily grasped as the mythological Southern redneck, in an ethnic contrast to an American of puritan Brit descent, epitomized in the mythological image of industrious, psalm-singing New Englanders. That the largest ethnic rift in American history took place between two different types of Brits will be a difficult point to grasp, perhaps, for those latercomers who think that all WASP's look alike.

Let us assume as a model a feudal, later a modern, England, developing over many centuries along the lines of intensive agriculture, commerce, and orderly communal life. By contrast, consider the outer fringes of Britain, not only Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, but the north and west of England herself, existing over several millennia (until the 19th century) with an economy based upon stockgrazing and a much looser social structure, more tribal than feudal or commercial — with all the differences in manners, attitudes, and ways of life that these differences in ethnic origin, economy, and social structure entail.

Both these models were implanted in America in the colonial period and both underwent development here, according to the large historical scheme that is postulated and vigorously filled in by McWhiney, with the aid of Forrest McDonald in the prologue.

A cracker is not simply a backward fellow. Crackers come in all classes with all levels of education and in a variety of religious denominations. Though I have a doctor's degree and have published a few books, I don't mind telling you that I am a cracker, at least by descent. Nor do I think Professor McWhiney will mind too much if I call him one as well. Perhaps the most conspicuous cracker in American history was our seventh president, General Andrew Jackson. I would even argue, though McWhiney does not make this point, that Abraham Lincoln was a cracker. Certainly that was his background, though he worked hard and with only partial success to assimilate himself to a puritan model as his political career progressed. After his death, the New Englanders simply appropriated him as a puritan, as they have done everything else in American history that they wanted to control. (I wish you had been there when I tried to explain to the lady guide at Plymouth Rock that we were *not* on the scene of the *first* English colony. Talk about stonewalling!)

Where earlier historians have been interested in the aristocracy of the South, whether they admired it or

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deprecated it, McWhiney believes the distinctiveness of the South is in its redneckery, so to speak, and he gives that phenomenon historical depth by an examination of similarities and continuities ranging over many centuries of Celtic Britain and the American South—similarities in customs, attitudes, recreation, social roles, ideas of family and individual honor, combativeness, and skepticism of progress in its urbanized, puritanical form. The marshaling of the evidence for similarity and continuity, ranging over millennia but concentrated in the 18th and 19th centuries, is the core of the book.

Explanations of Southern distinctiveness have been one of the most creative fields of American historical writing, calling forth the ingenuity of U.B. Phillips, C. Vann Woodward, David M. Potter, Professor McWhiney's mentor Francis Butler Simkins, and a host of others. McWhiney's is the best explanation because it is the most inclusive. It covers the greatest time period and the largest range of phenomena.

U.B. Phillips's postulate of white supremacy as the central theme of Southern history can be seen here from its positive side, as the Southerner's assertion and protection of his own identity among the peoples of the world. Those who before, during, and after the Civil War thought that what they regarded as the violence and unprogressiveness of the South was a product of slavery will, if they are honest, have to explain why nearly identical characteristics appeared with the Celt in ages and climes far from the African bondsman of the antebellum South.

As with any work of history, it is possible to pencil in a few reservations at the margins. What is described is a very real historical phenomenon. To label it "Celtic," however, perhaps raises more questions than it answers, and requires a considerable exegesis. Another reservation I have is that the description of the Celt and the cracker relies necessarily and primarily on the observations of unsympathetic outsiders, resulting inevitably in a negative stereotyping which the author accepts a little too readily at face value.

Such descriptions often tell us more about how the modernizing, urbanizing, puritan observer thought than about what the Celt-cracker was really like. The puritan is by his very nature interested in condemning. He draws much of his sense of identity and importance from what he rejects, from feeling himself better than others. The cracker, on the other hand, simply wants to be himself. He is hardly aware of the puritan's existence until directly threatened.

To say that the cracker is lazy or violent is to make a partisan value judgment, not an objective description. The cracker does not lack concepts of work, law and order, and propriety. It is just that his concepts are different, and adapted to a different situation. To understand him better, one will have to go to Celtic and Southern literature and song.

We crackers do have our virtues. The American frontiersman and the crackers are synonymous. We have certainly provided more than our fair share of the loyalty that has sustained American society in crisis—the kind of loyalty that goes into combat without thought of profit and without need of folderol about saving the world for democracy. It is not for nothing that the British referred to the American air arm in World War II as the "Royal Texas Air Force," and that the Japanese shouted "To Hell with Roy Acuff!" before a charge. They knew who their real enemy was. It is also true, I think, that us crackers have provided nearly all of the color and creativity of American speech and literature. Billy Faulkner was one of our boys, just to name the head of a long list. Without us crackers, American speech would be the flattest, dullest, and least interesting of any known variety of that magnificent tongue, English.

My last and largest reservation is that, while *Cracker Culture* goes a long way toward defining one aspect of the identity of the South, it does not quite finish the job. In a way, *Cracker Culture* is an improvement on the old story of explaining the Civil War as a contest of Roundheads and Cavaliers, substituting the cracker for the Cavalier. However, the essential point about the Old South, it seems to me, is that *it was a highly viable synthesis of both the cracker and the Cavalier*. Having established the descent and the importance of the cracker culture, McWhiney needs next to examine the synthesis. Both components—in distinction from the puritan—preferred honor to utility.

Washington, Jefferson, and Lee, after all, were not crackers, though they were heroes to nearly all Southerners. John C. Calhoun, William Gilmore Simms, and Jefferson Davis were not crackers either, though all of them had Celtic fathers. They were a synthesis of what the Celt had brought to the South and of the Cavalier inheritance of the Southern colonial tidewater—a synthesis that has remained characteristic into much later times. (I think of Harry Byrd, Richard Russell, and Sam Ervin.)

I hasten to assure you that I am aware that historians long ago proved that the "Cavalier South" was a fraud, that most Southerners were not descended from dukes and earls and did not live in tidewater mansions.

Still, it is a matter of record that a substantial portion of the early settlers of Virginia, and to a lesser extent the other Southern colonies, *were* younger sons of the gentry and higher bourgeoisie of England (something that can be of little interest to a society that prides itself of being made up of the wretched refuse of the earth). But, of course, nobody ever *did* think that most Southerners were descended from Royalist nobility, except for romancers whose works were mainly read by Northern matrons, and unimaginative historians looking for a straw man to knock down. The idea of the Southern Cavalier and the Northern Roundhead was not meant as a photographic reality on either side, but as a metaphor for certain values and principles and tendencies in conflict.

Having given us the cracker in his full glory, McWhiney ought now to describe for us the process of amalgamation between the cracker and that even earlier Southern culture, that colonial tidewater whose social ideals were determined not by the Celtic fringe but by the gentry ethics and ideals of the Southern English counties. The distinctive elements of the Southern accent also came more from this source than from the Celts (or the Africans). All the real authorities agree on this.

The synthesis of cracker and Cavalier culture has had many results, one

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of which is that the South has been at the same time more aristocratic and more populist than any other part of America. It thus has remained an incomprehensible problem for those whose imaginations are circumscribed by urban middle-class proprieties. This includes nearly all American historians, many of whom flunked marketing and civil engineering because they lacked the necessary imagination and so turned to scholarship. (The single greatest shortcoming of American historians, in general, is an excess of literal-mindedness in dealing with ideas. The second greatest shortcoming is a lack of sufficient literal-mindedness in dealing with documentary evidence.)

These reservations about *Cracker Culture* I intend not as criticism but as addenda and commentary on a stimulating work. Persecuted minority that we are, us crackers will have to stick together. At least we no longer have to worry about the Roundheads. The few of them that are left have their hands full on other fronts.

The President's President *by Arnold Beichman*

"Politicians neither love nor hate. Interest, not sentiment, governs them."

—Chesterfield

1999: Victory Without War **by Richard Nixon, New York: Simon & Schuster.**

Richard Nixon's second term as president ended over two years early with his resignation on August 9, 1974. Someday, when President Reagan's papers and telephone logs are made public, I think they will reveal that Nixon completed his presidential term in the second Reagan administration as the vicar of US foreign policy. After all, one of Reagan's best friends, Senator Paul Laxalt, anointed Nixon as the Republican Party's one and only "elder statesman."

A reading of Nixon's latest book on foreign policy prescriptions plus his earlier post-1974 writings leads me to believe that in Reagan's second term, the voice was the voice of Reagan but the hands were the hands of Nixon.

How do I know that Nixon, the Sage of Saddle River, NJ, is Reagan's foreign policy Solomon? Because of the reverential, vatic pages in Nixon's book on the necessity for and benefits of annual US-USSR summits. For Ronald Reagan, who began his term of office in 1981 very much against communist imperialism, to have become almost overnight a *sforzando* summiteer—Geneva, Reykjavik, Washington, Moscow and, Gorbachev willing, one more summit before January 20, 1989—cries out for an explanation. We know what happened to Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. We don't yet know what happened to Ronald of Washington on the apostolic road between Geneva and Moscow.

In fairness, Nixon takes a much harder view of Gorbachev than Reagan does. In fact, says Nixon, Gorbachev's accession "represents the beginning of a dangerous, challenging new stage of the struggle between the superpowers." Paradoxically, just because Gorbachev is "a far more formidable adversary . . . it also opens up greater possibilities for peace." Yet if Gorbachev's reforms succeed and Soviet foreign policy remains unchanged, then Gorbachev will "have more resources with which to strengthen and expand the Soviet empire." Does President Nixon think Soviet foreign policy will or can change? Go figure.

The first term Reagan would never have bought Nixon's ideas on anything. After all, Nixon has never been a conservative, either in office or out. That is why *Newsweek* could praise him (in 1986) for having "left a legacy of solid achievement." It is a legacy invisible to the naked conservative eye. In 1974, the *Bulletin of the National Review* said it was ironic that many American conservatives had harnessed themselves "into tandem with one who is not and has never been a conserva-

Arnold Beichman, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, is writing a book on Soviet treaty diplomacy.

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tive in either theory or practice." Under his presidency, for the first time in the nation's peacetime history, federal wage and price controls were introduced. His fiscal and monetary policies drove the inflation rate to its then highest peacetime level. He proposed a $20 billion guaranteed income welfare plan and a $30 billion national health insurance plan. He agreed to the expulsion from the UN of Nationalist China, and then signed a treaty with Communist China, and finally, under SALT I he accepted an inferiority in strategic arms vis-à-vis the USSR and agreed to an illusory détente which crashed while he was still in office. So much for "détente plus deterrence."

What about the future? Nixon writes:

> Our aspirations are in direct conflict. America wants peace; the Soviet Union wants the world. Our foreign policy respects the freedom of other countries; theirs tries to destroy it. We seek peace as an end in itself; they seek peace only if it serves their ends. The Soviets pursue those ends unscrupulously, by all means short of all-out war. For the Soviets, peace is a continuation of war by other means.

The Soviet Union is, he says, "an inherently aggressive power because its totalitarian system cannot survive without expanding. The Soviet system of internal repression is the root cause of its aggressive foreign policy."

What remains unclear is why the US should negotiate with a country which, to quote Nixon again, is guilty of "diplomatic treachery" and therefore cannot be expected to live by the bilateral rules of détente. Doesn't negotiation imply an essential condition of mutual trust? If the house crapshooter won't allow an on-site inspection of the dice, why would anyone want to risk his capital?

Nixon still insists that negotiations are essential, for the following reasons:

* He rejects a school of thought which argues that the less we negotiate with Moscow, the better for our side. He concedes that the Soviets exploit negotiations as a way of achieving their victory without war; while "too often we use negotiations only to achieve peace without victory." Nixon doesn't spell out what he means by "peace without victory"; we are only in the presence of a piety.
* A president who opposed negotiations per se would be opposed by Congress and a large sector of the American people. That doesn't prevent Nixon from savaging Reykjavik: "no summit since Yalta has threatened Western interests so much as the two days at Reykjavik." Reagan must have nodded off while Nixon was talking.
* Even with communists, statecraft and negotiations can make a "positive difference." As proof, Nixon offers his successful dealings with China. He defines "statecraft" as the capacity to integrate all our capabilities — military power, economic clout, covert action, propaganda, and diplomacy.
* Without summits, NATO would fall apart because Western Europe fears nuclear war far more than Soviet expansionism. Nixon takes a crack at Reagan's onetime "belligerent rhetoric about the Soviets" which, coupled with Gorbachev's brilliant public relations "peace" campaign, have contributed to the NATO crisis.
* A reduction in East-West tensions, says Nixon, divides the East more than the West. While confrontation makes a dictatorship stronger, contact and negotiation can weaken it.

The Nixon administration's use of the word "détente" is, to my mind, one of the great deceptions in American foreign policy, and alas, President Reagan's second term has become a new testing ground for Nixon's old foreign policy. Détente was actually a euphemism for Cold War, a term which Nixon and Henry Kissinger eschewed early on.

Détente meant cooperation between the two superpowers, according to the Nixon-Brezhnev declaration of May 1972. That paper charged the two countries with a "special responsibility . . . to do everything in their power so that conflicts or situations will not arise which would increase international tensions." A document outlining 12 "basic principles of relations" between the US and the USSR was agreed upon as a code of conduct.

At the first opportunity, the Soviet Union violated those principles in the events leading up to the 1973 Yom Kippur war. The Soviets knew the surprise Arab attack was coming at least four days before it happened on October 6. Not only did they not warn the US what was coming, they attempted to widen the war by transporting Moroccan troops to the front. Three days after the Arab attack on Israel, Brezhnev, President Nixon's partner in an agreement "to do everything in their power so that conflicts or situations will not arise which would increase international tensions," sent Algeria (and a day later all Arab countries) a message saying that "Syria and Egypt must not remain alone in their fight against a perfidious enemy."

Brezhnev gave a speech in Moscow the day before sending that message, in which he expressed the hope that the Arab aggression against Israel wouldn't disturb "détente." Well, it didn't, even though on October 25, 1973, President Nixon ordered a Grade Three nuclear alert and even though Brezhnev made it clear that he was prepared to send in Red Army airborne divisions to rescue the encircled Egyptian Third Army unless the Israelis withdrew.

In 1972 Nixon characterized détente as "the new foundation [which] has been laid for a new relationship between the two most powerful nations in the world." Today he writes: "Diplomatic treachery, military intimidation, and aggression by proxy are standard operating procedures for the Kremlin leaders." What Nixon fails to answer is how come he didn't appreciate the perversity of Soviet communism in 1972? Why did he and Secretary of State Kissinger stake their political careers on détente? Why did he discourage intelligence estimates which stressed the Soviet threat? Kissinger went so far in his appeasement of the Soviets as to forbid the Voice of America to broadcast a reading of *The Gulag Archipelago* on the VOA Russian language program.

Perhaps Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has the answer. In 1980 he described what he called the "Kissinger syndrome." It pertains, he said, to "individuals [who], while holding high office pursue a policy of appeasement and capitulation . . . but immediately upon retirement the scales fall from their eyes and they begin to advocate firmness and resolution."

If only Reagan had listened to his own instincts, instead of listening to the advice of a failed president. Leonid

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Brezhnev had good reason to boast at a meeting of Communist Parties in Prague in 1973, at the height of the Nixon-Kissinger détente policy:

> We have been able to achieve more in a short time with détente than was done for years pursuing a confrontation policy with NATO. . . . Trust us, Comrades, for by 1985, as a consequence of what we are now achieving with détente . . . we will be able to extend our will wherever we need to.

Joseph Stalin was able to win prestigious recruits worldwide to his Stockholm "Peace" Campaign. The names which in 1948 and 1949 graced the Stockholm peace petitions were world-famous. Khrushchev enlisted his "peace" battalions in the West despite the 1956 Hungarian massacre, the Berlin Wall, and the missiles of October. Brezhnev proclaimed "peace" despite the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Andropov sent dissidents to psychiatric hospitals and shot down a civilian Korean airliner, but to the US media he was known to be a lover of Scotch, the tango, and American novels.

Now we have Mikhail Gorbachev and Raisa and her American Express Gold Card. Chernobyl, what's that? Nick Danilov frame-up? Forgotten. Watch the great détente drama in the Kremlin between the forces of light and *glasnost* and the forces of darkness and black reaction, between the superhawks like Ligachev and the superdoves like Yeltsin and hardheaded détentists like Gorbachev. What a script, what a plot. Guess who's going to win? The magic of détente is that with it you can do anything — even make a wilderness and call it peace.

The Madness of Art *by James W. Tuttleton*

"In relation to Gauguin, Van Gogh and Rimbaud, I have a distinct inferiority complex because they managed to destroy themselves. . . . I am more and more convinced that, in order to achieve authenticity, something has to snap."

—Sartre

***Manic Power: Robert Lowell and His Circle* by Jeffrey Meyers, New York: Arbor House; $17.95.**

In "Resolution and Independence," Wordsworth lamented that "We Poets in our youth begin in gladness, / But thereof come in the end despondency and madness." This observation, as well as Sartre's in the epigraph, testifies to the self-destructive risk to the writer who may be drawn to poetry as a means of expressing, rather than objectifying and controlling, the anarchy of feeling that occasionally threatens to erupt. In any case, since the time of Wordsworth, we have had a long, unbroken Romantic literary tradition marked by the idealization and indulgence of feeling, especially despondency and madness — at the expense of reflective thought. Some years ago, Winfield Scott remarked that "Our saddest stories are biographies of 20th Century America writers, Thomas Wolfe, Hart Crane, Vachel Lindsay,

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Scott Fitzgerald, Edna Millay, Eugene O'Neill, probably Hemingway when we know it." He went on to remark that it would take "a combination of psychologist, sociologist, literary historian and critic, as well as an expert in alcoholism, to try to explain why."

In *Manic Power: Robert Lowell and His Circle*, Jeffrey Meyers combines all of these skills to add the latest sobering chapter to what I have called the unbroken line of Romantic verse that, in glorifying emotion as such, reaches an extremity in madness. Meyers, a professor of English at the University of Colorado, here presents a concise, sharply delineated composite biography of four tragic post-World War II American poets—Robert Lowell, Randall Jarrell, John Berryman, and Theodore Roethke. A final chapter narrates the story of Sylvia Plath, the suicide-poet who knew them or their work and who preceded them in death. Without flinching from the anarchy of their disordered personal lives and the suffering they caused their relatives and friends, Meyers contends that

> mental illness *seemed* to stimulate their creative genius, for the constant anxiety, terror and sense of doom intensified isolation and introspection, heightened the intellectual defiance of the social outcast who questions and challenges conventional ideas about morality, and encouraged the poet to control the potentially dangerous element in his character through the order and form of art.

Their verse reflects, in short, a manic power.

Plato of course suspected the poet's rhapsody of being a derangement of the mind itself. But implicit in his criticism was the view that the rhapsodic inspiration of the poet is a transient madness in which reason is temporarily eclipsed by the numinous afflatus of the god. But with the modern poets whom Jeffrey Meyers has brilliantly analyzed, we are faced with a prolonged or recurrent madness not of divine origin. Lowell, Berryman, Jarrell, and Roethke were poets who, Professor Meyers tells us, had ineffectual or absent fathers, strong, seductive, or even monstrous mothers who "devoured their sons, unwilling sexual substitutes for their fathers, with an overwhelming passion." As he recounts it, "The poets' serious problems with their parents led to tempestuous marriages, which were characterized by infidelity, alcoholism, violence and mental breakdowns. . . . The lack of a father and presence of an oppressive mother not only contributed to their emotional instability, but led them to mistreat their wives in order to vindicate their fathers and punish their mothers."

It is Meyers' view that all four of these poets were trapped in an identical pattern of eccentricities that faded into and out of violence and insanity. Roethke had his first breakdown in 1935 at the age of 27; Berryman in 1939 at the age of 25; Lowell in 1949 at the age of 32. All were hospitalized for mental illness; shock treatment was common. Jarrell, on being released from a psychiatric ward after a failed suicide attempt, ran out onto a highway in 1965 and threw himself in front of an automobile. In 1972 Berryman, like his own father, also committed suicide—by jumping off a bridge in Minneapolis. (Auden is said to have been the source of a malicious tale to the effect that Berryman left a suicide note for Lowell saying "Your move, Cal." But Lowell and Roethke died of heart attacks undeniably connected to their alcoholism and manic frenzy.)

Under ordinary circumstances, it would take some digging into the biographical archive to document the mental illness of these poets. Professor Meyers in fact gives us the result of this kind of research. But these poets—rejecting Eliot's call for impersonality in verse—incorporated their experience of madness right into the poetry they wrote: they bled directly onto the page. And herein, I am afraid, lies a large part of their morbid appeal. We go to their powerful poems as people rush to the scene of an automobile accident—for the chill, the ghastly thrill, of seeing the bodies strewn about and bleeding.

In a brilliant reformulation that cuts right through the cant of much apologetic defense of the Lowell circle, Professor Meyers remarks that "The literary manifestation of the mental illness of Lowell, Berryman and Roethke came to be known as confessional poetry." The same is true of Jarrell, who was only "more covert in the expression of his psychological depression." In this judgment Meyers is perfectly on target. All four exposed their childhood unhappiness, rage at parents, marital chaos, and mental derangement, in their poetry, with a thrilling candor. Lowell, the most distinguished of the four poets and the acknowledged leader of the group, led the way, excoriating his parents in *Life Studies*, exposing the conjugal strife he created for his long-suffering wife Elizabeth Hardwick, and confessing in "Skunk Hour" that "My mind's not right." According to Meyers, Lowell "dominated his friends by an overwhelming force of will and led them to disaster and destruction" and encouraged "the impulses that fed the crack-up verse of his students, Anne Sexton and Sylvia Plath, and led directly to their suicides." This is a harsh judgment, one which refuses to romanticize the Lowell circle as they romanticized themselves, but it is based on the documented facts of their jealous and imitative interrelationships.

Sylvia Plath, for example, acclaimed *Life Studies* as an "intense breakthrough into very serious, very personal, emotional experience which I feel has been partly taboo. Robert Lowell's poems about his experience in a mental hospital, for example, interested me very much"—as well they might have, since she had already tried and failed to commit suicide, an experience she then recounted in *The Bell Jar* and several poems. Lowell's revelation of what she called his "naked psyche" became the model for Berryman's *Dream Songs*, Jarrell's "Thinking of the Lost World," Plath's "Daddy," and Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz"—all intimate self-exposures of damaged sensibilities.

As Meyers skeptically notes, both Berryman and Lowell believed that "madness gave the poet a kind of visionary power and put him in touch with deeper truths that were beyond the reach of ordinary men." Even Roethke, in "In a Dark Time," exalted the demented state: "What's madness but nobility of soul / At odds with circumstance?" With this viewpoint it is no wonder that Roethke tried to induce attacks of madness by the Rimbaudian trick of deranging his own senses. On one occasion he went into the woods, deliberately started dancing in circles, stripped off his clothes, and went into a frenzy. He claimed to

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experience cosmic consciousness, sexual excitement, and "this curious sense that you're actually being transformed literally into an animal":

> You start getting fantasies—I mean, of power, lion-like power. . . . Of course, this was madness, you see, but the relationship between the ecstasy and madness is . . . one of the things that the headshrinkers know. . . . I woke up on the morning . . . with very little sleep, and decided I wanted to get to [the Dean's] office."

What the Dean thought was not reported.

On the whole, however, the poets analyzed in Professor Meyers' absorbing study did not *induce* but were content to *blame* their madness on parents, wives, or friends. Berryman went so far as to blame America itself for their dementia: "You ask why my generation seems so screwed up? . . . It seems they have every right to be disturbed. The current American society would drive anybody out of his skull, anybody who is at all responsive; it is almost unbearable. It doesn't treat poets very well." If this seemed paranoid, Lowell embraced the explanation: "John B., in his mad way keeps talking about something evil stalking us poets. That's a bad way to talk, but there's truth to it." If anything was stalking the poets, however, it was the deranged inner self in each that could not be kept at bay. It was this self that led Berryman to say that, in order to create, the poet had to experience "the worst possible ordeal which will not actually kill him. . . . I hope to be nearly crucified."

But Berryman in fact crucified himself because he could not accept his father's suicide. A journal entry for 1954 reveals both his rage at his father and his feelings of excremental worthlessness: "So [my] dream is my bloody father looking down at me, whom he's just f---ed by killing himself, making me into a s--t: and taunting me before he flushes me away." Like Berryman, Plath also had the insane impulse to dig up the body of her father, so as to rage at him for having had the cruelty to die of diabetes when she was eight. And in "Daddy," she imaged the father Otto Plath as a Nazi, a devil, and a vampire; she then transmogrified him into her husband Ted Hughes, who finally had had to separate himself from her and from this madness. She got her "revenge" on them both by gassing herself to death in 1963. But neither of these hapless men ever approached the cruelty of Sylvia herself, who—in her mode of dying—permanently scarred her two children, who were in the house at the time. One of the merits of Professor Meyers' work is that he continually reminds us of the cost, to their loved ones, of these deranged feelings.

Lowell was of the opinion that it was perhaps "an irrelevant accident that [Sylvia Plath] actually carried out the death she predicted": it was "part of the imaginative risk." But as Professor Meyers' evidence makes dazzlingly plain, the mental problems of these writers were deeply rooted in the psychic constitution of each poet, not in the imaginative risks of writing verse. Nor was their derangement caused by American society, which honored them by giving them grants, awards, teaching jobs, recognition, publicity, praise, and success. (They were in fact the most celebrated writers of their time.) In any case, toward the end, Lowell remarked to Roethke, "There must be a kind of glory to it all that people coming later will wonder at. I can see us all being written up in some huge book of the age. But under what title?" Jeffrey Meyers has now written that book, and *Manic Power* offers a sharply critical account of the chaotic lives they translated directly into the disturbing verse. The book cannot fail to create a sense of wonder, but it is not quite of the kind Lowell hoped for. If these poets did not attain the glory they claimed for themselves—they were inferior to their predecessors Eliot, Stevens, and Frost—their story is nevertheless a parable of the risks—for poet and reader—of cultivating and romanticizing extremes of feeling.

Getting It Right

by John B. Judis

***The Conservative Movement* by Paul Gottfried and Thomas Fleming, Boston: Twayne Publishers.**

Writing a history of recent American conservatism is not like writing a history of baseball or the Social Security system. There is fairly wide agreement about what constitutes baseball and Social Security; at issue are specific details. But there is little agreement about what American conservatism is. Not merely the rocks and bushes, but the very terrain remains undefined.

There have always been "conservatives" in America—Ralph Waldo

BOOKS IN BRIEF

***Pella Dutch* by Philip E. Webber, Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press.** Sometimes we forget the submerged languages that affect our American English, the reasons why the people of Pella, Iowa, for instance, say, "Are you coming *with*?" instead of the grammatical "along." Philip Webber's slim but informative volume should prove lively reading even for those langauge buffs whose ancestry is not Dutch.

***Twice as Less* by Eleanor Wilson Orr, New York: W. W. Norton & Company.** A book about so-called "Black English," this volume by a schoolteacher with 35 years of classroom experience explains why meaning must be adequately *expressed* for speech to be functional and communicative.

***Writing Red: An Anthology of American Women Writers, 1930-1940* edited by Charlotte Nekola and Paula Rabinowitz, New York: The Feminist Press.** There is nothing wrong with this pamphlet by a cadre of *idée fixe* activists and ideologues that some humor would not cure.

***The Education of a Yankee* by Judson Hale, New York: Harper & Row.** A good memoir by a New Englander who was taught to know and feel that "a Yankee's a man who ain't leanin' on nothin'."

***Pepper: Eyewitness to a Century* by Claude Denson Pepper with Hays Gorey, San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.** "I was a New Dealer before there was a New Deal," writes former US Senator Claude Pepper. For a man who, at 88, still feels that his views about a benign Soviet Union are "vindicated by events," the world holds few secrets and, perhaps, very few truths as well.

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Emerson wrote about "the conservative" in the 1840's. Throughout the 20th century there has been a recognizable right wing in American politics that included such figures as the late Ohio senator Robert Taft and Arizona senator Barry Goldwater. But until the late 1950's there never was a self-identified "conservative movement."

American conservatism was invented, not discovered. The politics of this movement were not simply borrowed from foreign models like the British Conservative Party, but were developed out of existing and sometimes obscure strands of American politics. And the different parts and tendencies of the conservative movement were held together not by a common essence, but sometimes frayed family ties. Thus, to define conservatism remains not simply a historical but a political act, and venturing out on this darkling plain even well-traveled scholars like Paul Gottfried and Thomas Fleming can become lost.

In this slim volume, Gottfried and Fleming display considerable sensitivity to writing about modern conservatism. Their narrative is filled with the different "isms" (traditionalism, neoconservatism) and the different "Rights" (New, Old) that have laid claim to the term "conservative." They understand that conservatism was created in the 1950's. They understand the seminal role played in that process by the disreputable senator from Wisconsin, Joseph "I have a list of 205 communists" McCarthy. And they also understand that the movement itself has gone through distinct stages since its inception — most importantly, the move toward the political center that took place after Goldwater's defeat in 1964. This is commendable and makes *The Conservative Movement* a valuable commentary.

But Gottfried and Fleming, who belong themselves to a distinct "Old Right" fraction of conservatism, run into trouble drawing a line between history and commentary. In pressing their own conception of conservatism, they tend to magnify some strands of the conservative past and unduly shrink others. Two examples will suffice. Gottfried and Fleming appear to be uncomfortable with the populist pretensions of conservatives, and in describing the New Right, they claim that it "has learned to emphasize themes that are more populist than conservative." Some of what Gottfried and Fleming then list as populist — like "fear and resentment of the Eastern establishment" — have broadly characterized the American right in the 20th century and were an integral part of the conservatism of the 1950's and 1960's. Goldwater, for instance, was fond of asking for a saw so that he could cut off the Atlantic seaboard.

A more significant example concerns the relationship between "traditionalism" and the "Old Right." In the first chapters, Gottfried and Fleming argue perceptively that traditionalists' defense of "civilization" was "essential" to the definition of Old Right conservatism. But they also maintain — correctly, I believe — that Old Right traditionalism has become "increasingly irrelevant" to a "postwar right" that now appears fixed on achieving the peculiar American ideals of liberty and equality. In the conclusion to *The Conservative Movement*, however, Gottfried and Fleming bewildered me by asserting that the Old Right is not only alive and well, but the only faction of the conservative movement that "can most accurately be described as a social movement." Their proof of this point is more obscure — for instance, the fact that Confederate stalwart M.E. Bradford was supported in his bid for the directorship of the National Endowment for the Humanities by 20 senators and 60 congressmen. Using this criteria, one must assume that neoconservative William Bennett, who bested Bradford, represented a considerably larger "social movement."

The confusion that besets the conclusion of *The Conservative Movement* comes largely from not making a distinction — enunciated in the 1950's by political scientist Philip Converse — between "mass" and "elite" beliefs. Professors, activists, and intellectuals in general have always had a much more coherent framework of belief than the average voter, who is likely to detest "big government" but crave higher government spending on his roads and medical bills. It would have been a mistake to attribute, say, Rexford Tugwell's clearly articulated New Deal liberalism to the average Democratic voter of the 1930's; it is equally mistaken to attribute the traditionalists' view of social stratification or world history to congressional supporters of M.E. Bradford or, worse, those Southern voters who voted for Bradford's friends in the Senate. The late John East might have been aware of the Gnostic heresy, but it is unlikely many North Carolina Republicans were. They were often responding to other, disparate cues that were not necessarily at the core of elite traditionalism or conservatism.

This point is essential in assessing conservative history and in understanding conservatism's present political impasse. Gottfried and Fleming understand the extent to which traditional themes undergirded the Goldwater intelligentsia (not including Goldwater himself) and the Old Right of *National Review*. New York's Conservative Party, they note, opposed the welfare system "as a symptom and cause of social degeneracy." But they fail to note the difference between the Conservative Party's high-flown statements — best articulated in William F. Buckley's 1965 mayoral campaign — and the cruder sentiments that motivated that party's growing following among ethnic voters.

The failure to distinguish mass and elite blurs Gottfried and Fleming's discussion of the New Right, which played an extremely important role in making conservatism politically viable in the 1970's and early 1980's. New Right leaders like Richard Viguerie and Paul Weyrich based their politics on the distinction between mass and elite. Their goal was to unite George Wallace's mass constituency, which was drawn together by racial resentment and hatred of the Eastern establishment, with the elite conservatism of the Young Americans for Freedom or American Conservative Union. Kevin Phillips's book, *The Emerging Republican Majority*, was their guidebook. They knew the fit wasn't perfect between Voegelin and a Southern "redneck" committed to the common man while being fearful and contemptuous of blacks, but they were playing coalition politics, just like the Democrats. Gottfried and Fleming miss this entirely. They don't see the Wallace influence on Viguerie and Weyrich. Indeed, they mistakenly describe Wallace as a Republican. This leaves Gottfried and Fleming ill-equipped to appreciate

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the pickle that conservatives presently find themselves in: how to back a candidate like the patrician George Bush and retain this political coalition between mass and elite that has been at the heart of conservative political success.

Gottfried and Fleming are at their best handling intellectual rather than political developments in the conservative movement, but here, too, they suffer the pitfalls of redefining rather than interpreting history. The authors attribute Noam Chomsky's critique of B.F. Skinner's behaviorism and Edward O. Wilson's sociobiology to a "conservative" reaction to liberal intellectual trends. According to Gottfried and Fleming, Wilson's sociobiology or Konrad Lorenz's studies of human qua animal behavior "restored a sense of the 'givenness' of human nature." This is a provocative idea, and a novel way of seeing Chomsky (a political leftist), Wilson, and others who were rejecting liberal utopianism.

But what is intellectually stimulating is historically misleading. Calling Wilson's neo-Darwinism "conservative" tells us more about Gottfried and Fleming's eccentric and (in this respect) commendable brand of conservatism than it tells us about postwar American conservatism. The authors are again blurring the distinction between conservatives and American conservatives. As the authors acknowledge, not only fundamentalists like the Rev. Pat Robertson (whom Gottfried and Fleming inexplicably describe as "among the best educated political figures in the United States"), but also the Old Right and even some sophisticated neoconservatives treat Darwinism as a Bolshevik heresy. Here the relevant distinction is not between mass and elite, but between the conservative intelligentsia, which remains dominated by philistines and religious fanatics, and Gottfried and Fleming, who are willing to see the relevance of Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures*, Darwin, Freud, and Wittgenstein to the pursuit of knowledge.

Gottfried and Fleming's own political views do not come through clearly in *The Conservative Movement*, largely because they are trying to describe rather than take part in factional beefs. But it is evident that the authors' traditionalism is itself highly untraditional. The traditionalists of the 1940's and 1950's, like Russell Kirk and Richard Weaver, were, if anything, trying to adapt British conservatism to a mix of old Southern Democrat and Taft Republicanism. They quoted the Eliot of London, but their ideas still bore the stamp of Eliot's St. Louis. As the authors say, much of the "Old Right's outlook was determined by an inchoate patriotism, a sentimental affection for what remained of the old America."

But not Gottfried and Fleming's views. To the extent their views emerge, they have a strangely foreign cast, as if they were acquired in time travel back to 19th-century Europe and before. For instance, Gottfried and Fleming criticize — yes, criticize — the Reagan administration for not defending European colonialism as "symbols of European man's manifest destiny." Of course, 1950's conservatives like James Burnham defended European colonialism, but on the grounds of the Cold War against communism. Burnham expected colonial regimes would make more dependable allies; he said nothing about "manifest destiny" or "civilization." Gottfried and Fleming appear to be not merely traditionalists who believe that all men were not born equal, but racial theorists who believe only certain peoples are capable of self-government and intellectual advance. One gives thanks in the end that *they* don't represent a social movement, and are only the authors of this interesting and provocative book.

John B. Judis is a senior editor of In These Times *and the author of* William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives *(Simon & Schuster), reviewed in this issue.*

REVISIONS

Reinventing Community

Prophets have been predicting the disappearance of community life from the American scene since the War of Independence. The heroic settlement of the West, the great economic expansion of the 20th century, the mobility of corporate executives and blue-collar workers alike — all have conspired to undermine the comfortable sense of a settled order. John Crowe Ransom blamed it on the frontier; others blame capitalism. Whatever the cause, Americans have become a people very uncomfortable with themselves.

Communal life cannot, however, be dispensed with, and the often frightening attempts to recreate community through utopian settlements, religious societies, and political ideologies have been the subject of important books by scholars like Robert Hine, Thomas Bender, and most notably Robert Nisbet. In *Seeking Many Inventions: The Idea of Community in America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 214 pp.) Philip Abbott takes a somewhat more optimistic look at a variety of "social inventions" that have served to build a sense of what he calls "instant community": the telephone, the quilting bee, the motel, and the reformist group. While all these remedies are doomed to failure, they are evidence of man's unwillingness to accept his lot as unnamed citizen.

For a partial success story, Abbott turns to the natural childbirth movement — a "de-invention" rather than an invention — and concludes that "social spheres now contracted can be expanded." He sensibly warns against any attempts to construct an entire counterculture at odds with modern society: such utopias not only collapse with a resounding smash, but they also offer too many opportunities for manipulation. The Unification Church won't like this book, but it should be read by anyone interested in our marvelous capacity for renewal and regeneration at the most improbable times and with the most unlikely methods. (TF)

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Saint William

by John C. Chalberg

William F. Buckley, Jr.: Patron Saint of the Conservatives **by John B. Judis, New York: Simon & Schuster.**

Saint William? A canonization has occurred without prior beatification. A still living and breathing William F. Buckley Jr. has been elevated to sainthood. And by whom? Not by the pope and not by Buckley's own flock, but by a man of the left. And why? Not because of Buckley's continuing conservatism, but because he is no longer the same sort of conservative he was when he first began to make himself and his ideas known.

There is, you see, according to biographer Judis, more than one William F. Buckley. More specifically, a young "mahster" Buckley has "grown" during his nearly 40 years in the public eye. Or at least John Judis would have us believe as much. That Buckley youngster has stretched a bit, if not exactly filled out, in the years since he was Buckley Senior's good boy, Yale's bad boy, E. Howard Hunt's fair-haired boy, and Jack Paar's whipping boy. Does all this mean that William F. Buckley Jr. has ceased to be a conservative? No, but it does mean that he has become the sort of conservative Judis is able to tolerate, even admire.

Judis dwells at some length on the "reactionary" young Buckley, from the cradle through Yale. But the heart of his story is the post-CIA, post-*God and Man at Yale* Buckley who undertook the compromising and forbidding process of stitching together a conservative coalition from the "remnant" that was American conservatism in the 1950's. It was Albert J. Nock who first had the idea. It was Nock's great friend and benefactor, the senior Will Buckley, who considered himself to be a charter member of that coalition. And it would be William F. Buckley Jr. who would build upon that remnant within and without *National Review*.

As he has gotten older Buckley has learned that one can compromise to get a political victory without necessarily sacrificing one's basic principles or destroying one's peace of mind—or surrendering the twin beliefs of any good conservative. Growth or no growth, Bill Buckley has always been convinced that a perfect world is neither possible nor desirable, and a world fully politicized in the pursuit of perfection would be infinitely worse. Judis has detected flashes of doubt and even despair in both the private and public Buckley, but the broad portrait which emerges is one of a generally satisfied man at large in an all too satisfied country.

Judis would have us believe that some great transformation has taken place in the life of Bill Buckley. But has it? And if so, how did it happen? How did an always combative outsider transform himself into an often contented insider? How did a toothy aristocrat become the darling of the mass media? And how did an irresponsible radical make himself into a "responsible conservative"? Just who, if anyone, dragged William F. Buckley Jr. kicking and screaming, or, better, campling and inveighing, into the great gray world of the late 20th century? Judis points to Buckley himself, who has achieved his current level of respectability and understanding not by examining his life (Judis will gladly do that for him), but simply by living it. Of course, he has had his share of teachers.

It was Whittaker Chambers who taught Buckley the necessity of the "Beaconsfield position." So named for Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield, it was based upon the conservative acceptance of the "needs and hopes of the masses"—i.e., the welfare state. At first Buckley rejected Chambers' contention, as did Willi Schlamm, who was also present at the creation of *National Review*. It was Schlamm, the former communist, who joined with Buckley to make *National Review* into a bastion of anticommunism and free enterprise individualism. And it was Schlamm who objected strenuously to the notion that conservatives either had to face extinction or accommodate themselves to the "essentially socialist" desires of Chambers' masses. Buckley, however, disagreed, and so began the departure of Schlamm and other like-minded conservatives from the masthead.

During his long tenure at *National Review*, James Burnham performed a similar service for his adopted movement and precocious pupil. If Chambers taught the grudging acceptance of the welfare state, then Burnham advised against grudge matches with the Soviet state. From the failed 1956 Hungarian uprising on, James Burnham, architect of liberation, became James Burnham, practitioner of containment. Again Buckley resisted following his mentor, but eventually he came down on the side of Burnhamite accommodation. In short, intellectual battles within *National Review* foreshadowed political battles within the Reagan administration. And as those earlier battles were being waged, Buckley moved closer, ever closer, to a more pragmatic version of conservatism.

And battles there were. Battles over whether or not to canonize Senator McCarthy, endorse President Eisenhower, reject the John Birch Society, criticize Southern segregationists, endorse candidate Nixon, trumpet the candidacy of Goldwater, repudiate the Old Right, embrace the New Right, endorse candidate Nixon again, criticize President Nixon again and again, praise Henry Kissinger, support John Ashbrook, dump President Ford, oppose the Panama Canal treaties, and jump on the bandwagon of the leading Republican opponent of those treaties.

For Judis, the most significant upward step for Buckley was his decision to oppose the John Birch Society. With this move Buckley established himself as a member in good standing of the "responsible right." No longer a radical intent upon demolishing the status quo, he was now a conservative with all of the rights and obligations thereof. No longer would his rallying cry be "no enemies to the right." And no longer could he be denied acclaim, even celebrityhood. After all, no "Ike is a commie" shouter, no matter how clever he might be, could ever have found his way onto the *Jack Paar Show*.

According to Judis, Buckley was "inexorably drawn" to a career as a "popular journalist and political personality." Never would he write a big book or win public office. His single effort to compose such a tract never got much beyond a title: *Revolt from the Masses*. And his lone foray into the electoral jungles ended with his expected loss to John Lindsay in a race for mayor of New York.

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Patron saints seldom dirty their hands by campaigning for themselves or organizing campaigns for others. They may exhort their flock, but they are not much for actually marshaling the troops. Buckley has never shied away from his own "firing line," but was kept on the sidelines by the Goldwater brain trust and remained apart from all three Reagan presidential drives. In between there was Nixon, whom Buckley came close to serving as an in-house conservative. According to Judis, Buckley gradually awakened to discover that the Nixon White House had cynically set out to cultivate him in order to establish greater credibility with the conservative movement.

Nevertheless, William F. Buckley Jr. has never been a skeptic on the scale of another Paar regular, Oscar Levant. Nor has he been a pessimist of Whittaker Chambers's depth and variety. But he is not without a sense of tragedy when it comes to assessing the human condition, of fragility when it comes to pondering the state of the American experiment, and of limits when it comes to the possibility of repairing both.

A once obscure young editor who founded a once obscure magazine has become a permanent fixture among American celebrities, and on this last score Judis can be both infuriating and confusing. Without fear of self-contradiction, he accuses Buckley of disdain for the masses and of using the media, not to mention his own pen and tongue, to bring conservative ideas to the general public. Of course, it is possible to possess more than your share of arrogance and to pander to the masses at the same time. Just ask Gore Vidal. But no man who once insisted that he would rather be governed by the first 200 names in the Boston telephone directory than by the Harvard faculty can fairly be accused of elitism. And no man as diligent as Buckley has been about preaching to the unconverted can be charged with an ultimate lack of faith in the American Everyman.

Judis might be correct when he guesses that Buckley has become a caricature of himself—or at least a caricature of that demon we call celebrityhood. But I doubt that either is the case. Bill Buckley, young or not so young, surely seems to be someone who enjoys life too much to be a captive or caricature of anyone, even himself. He also seems to be someone who understands that enjoying this life does not demand being captured by it, and who knows himself without having to examine his life. Consciences, after all, are to be examined; lives are to be lived.

Buckley was—and is—a conservative whose Catholicism has always affected his politics. He was—and is—a conservative for whom political and economic freedom are equally important and mutually reinforcing. He was—and is—a man who enjoys the trappings of wealth without flaunting that wealth or expending great intellectual energy in its defense. He was—and is—someone who believes that making money should not be the major purpose of anyone's life, let alone a conservative's life. He was—and is—an anticommunist and an enemy of anti-anticommunism. He was—and is—a thinker who understands the limits of politics and a doer who accepts the necessity of politics. And he was—and is—the sort of doer who would rather sail the globe than govern his country. It is also true that William F. Buckley Jr. was once—and may yet again be—a small piece of Albert J. Nock's saving remnant.

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Old Possum

by Warren Smith

***Possum, And Other Receits for the Recovery of Southern Being* by Marion Montgomery, Atlanta: University of Georgia Press; $16.00.**

Thirty years ago, in the fall of 1957, the Fugitive-Agrarian poet Donald Davidson delivered the first Lamar Memorial Lectures in a small auditorium usually reserved for piano recitals on the campus of Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. Those three lectures, published in a slender volume bearing the legend *Southern Writers in the Modern World*, have become essential reading for students of Southern letters because Davidson did not succumb to the temptation to reminisce about those fertile days in the 1920's, 30's, and 40's which we now call the Southern Literary Renaissance. Rather, he traced the stream of history and ideas that made those days so fertile; and he allowed his audience access to that history and those ideas by explicating not his own work or the work of his Fugitive-Agrarian contemporaries, but the work of his forebears, from the Greek playwrights forward. Thereby he placed the Southern writers in a historical as well as a geographical context.

In the shadow of this famous lecturer—or, more accurately, casting his own shadow in the light of Davidson—stands Marion Montgomery, whose *Possum, And Other Receits for the Recovery of Southern Being*, marks the 30th anniversary of those same Lamar Lectures.

Those who have read other of Montgomery's books, poems, or essays will not be altogether surprised by his summoning of the "lowly possum" to stand as metaphor in this recipe for Southern being. For the possum, like the Southerner, is an ancient beast, and—also like the Southerner—his way of life has been significantly altered on the asphalt and beneath the ever-rolling tires of Progress. But Montgomery would have us understand right away that his invocation of the possum is not entirely playful. *Possum* represents not only a small, white marsupial; it is also the word from the Latin lexicon which brings together the ideas of "being" and "doing." It means "I am able" and is conjugated *possum, posse, potui*. And indeed the conditions of "being" and "doing" are the primary subjects of these lectures, especially as man's "knowing" relates to his being and doing.

He points out, for example, that among man's first actions was his naming of the animals. This action, Montgomery maintains, is archetype for a key ingredient in his recipe: a sense of the "relation between the word we give a thing and [the thing's] reality, a relation to be ignored at the cost of spiritual chaos in each person and in family and in community." Ignoring the relation between words and reality, Montgomery and many others (chief among them Richard Weaver, whom

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Montgomery calls a "second generation Fugitive-Agrarian") have termed Nominalism. Montgomery concludes that the Southerner is "by nature an antinominalist," demonstrating his antinominalism no more plainly than when he begins his recipe for possum with the instruction: "First, catch a possum." But this antinominalism is not merely the result of a desire for precise instruction in the *doing* of a thing. Antinominalism—as the reference to the naming of the animals suggests—is the result of a sense of a thing's being-ness, what Montgomery calls "the mystery of our peculiar possumhood." Again, he is not being entirely playful, for it is exactly the tension between "being" and "doing" that gives rise to consciousness and language.

Montgomery would have us understand, too, that there is no way to talk of nominalism or antinominalism or any of a broad range of philosophical concerns without establishing a theological position. Both nominalism and antinominalism derive from respective positions as to the nature and efficacy of a creator. Montgomery implies that the nominalist is one who has, like the original animal namer, "become perversely gnostic through eager presumptuousness." We labor still, he tells us, under this same presumptuousness, manifest in New Deals, New Souths, and other plans aimed at social perfection. "*I am able* becomes dominant," Montgomery writes. "Lost is its complement, *I am enabled*." And in this loss an Eden turns to Babylon.

Another ingredient in Montgomery's receit is tradition. Of course, he is careful with his use of the word, mindful that misappropriation of the word and a manipulation of the record "dries the stream of history, leaving residually mint julips and hoop skirts." His care is shown, for example, when he quotes T.S. Eliot's famous distinction between the words *tradition* and *orthodoxy*, from Eliot's own lectures at the University of Virginia (which were published in 1933 as *After Strange Gods*). Eliot writes that tradition "must largely be . . . unconscious; whereas . . . orthodoxy is a matter which calls for all our conscious intelligence." Eliot holds tradition to be of a lower level than orthodoxy, saying that tradition "is of the blood . . . rather than of the brain." Montgomery, who agrees with Eliot in most matters, takes exception with him here:

> The point of our attention to *After Strange Gods* is to suggest that for the Fugitive-Agrarians, and especially for Davidson and Tate, there is an orthodoxy in tradition itself, requiring the intellect's discovery of a validity in tradition deeper than merely its presence "in a social group." To have been "Southern-born" was to have had a laying on of hands by tradition . . . affecting both blood and brain.

So for the Fugitive-Agrarians and, presumably, for Montgomery himself, tradition and orthodoxy are, if not one, at least "of a piece." Montgomery attributes Eliot's slowness to grasp this truth to his "Unitarian *née* Puritan family origins" which left him "hard-pressed to discover any meaning to existence." Donald Davidson, on the other hand, had by virtue of his Southern birth "inherited a community of understanding about man, nature, and God less desperately engaged than by [Eliot's] New England intellectualism."

It is worth noting at this point that just as not all those born in New England are victims of "New England intellectualism," neither are all those born south of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi (or the Pecos) "Southerners." Which is to say, too, that catching a Southern-born critter is not a necessary ingredient for Montgomery's receit for possum. "I have argued," he writes,

> for Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn as a "Southerner." I have pointed to "Southern" concerns in people as diverse as Ezra Pound in the *Cantos* and William Carlos Williams in *Paterson*. . . . I have argued "Southern" concerns in Hawthorne no less than in Faulkner, in Henry Adams no less than in William Alexander Percy. There is a concern in the English-poet . . . David Jones . . . that makes him companionable to both Allen Tate and Donald Davidson. For Jones, too, attempts through art to recover to us *anathemata*, i.e., "the blessed things."

Reducing Montgomery's receit to a few key ingredients in no way does justice to *Possum*'s intent to "bring together St. Paul, St. Thomas, Yeats, Weaver, Eric Voegelin, Eliot, Davidson, Tate, and a host of others past and present in a resistance to the corrosive presence of gnosticism in community." It is enough to say that he is to a remarkable degree successful in his attempt, and anyone who would "explore . . . principles . . . vital to any community, whatever the state or country or date in history" might find in *Possum* a nourishing meal indeed.

Warren Smith edits North Fulton *magazine*.

Play It Again, Alger

by Terry Teachout

***Recollections of a Life* by Alger Hiss, New York: Henry Holt.**

After 40 years, Alger Hiss is still hard at it. *Recollections of a Life*, his second book, combines a pale, noncommittal account of Hiss's pre-1948 career as itinerant paperpusher (Justice Holmes, the New Deal, Yalta, the Carnegie Endowment) with yet another rehashing of the old, old story. *Whittaker Chambers was crazy. I'm an honest man. I will be vindicated.* The touchy spots are evasively skirted, the familiar refrains resung. Who cares? The friends of Alger Hiss will buy it out of yawning habit. Others will stay far away.

The main difference between the reception of *Recollections of a Life* and *In the Court of Public Opinion*, Hiss's previous book, is that the climate of opinion regarding the Hiss-Chambers case has shifted profoundly in the ensuing years. In intellectually respectable circles it used to be easy enough to avow a belief in Hiss's innocence without being hooted out of the room. The publication of Allen Weinstein's *Perjury* changed all that. *Perjury* was an extraordinarily detailed factual examination of the Hiss-Chambers case writ-

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ten by a liberal historian who started out believing that Alger Hiss was innocent and ended up convinced of his guilt. It knocked the stuffing out of Hiss, to say nothing of his dwindling band of Stalinoid loyalists. (The fact that in *Recollections* Hiss has next to nothing to say about Weinstein is more revealing than anything else about the book.)

The other thing that has changed, of course, is the reputation of Whittaker Chambers. Forty years ago, he was a morose, rumpled senior editor of *Time*, a magazine which could scarcely have been in worse odor among the respectable liberals of the day. Thirty years ago, he was a morose, rumpled senior editor of *National Review*, a magazine widely thought to be published by right-wing fanatics for right-wing fanatics. Eight years ago, the right-wing fanatics took over the White House and promptly became trendy. Ronald Reagan posthumously awarded Chambers the Medal of Freedom. Pipe Creek Farm, site of the sacred pumpkin patch, was declared a national landmark a few months ago. John Judis's new biography of William F. Buckley Jr. makes a highly persuasive case for Chambers having exerted a moderating influence on Buckley and, by implication, the entire conservative movement. You can't get much further in than that.

To be sure, the battle is not yet won. *Concealed Enemies*, the hideous PBS "docudrama" about the Hiss-Chambers case, confused a lot of ignorant television viewers a few years back. Even today, *Recollections of a Life* managed to snag a reputable publisher and rack up a few favorable reviews, one of them in *The New York Times*. But Alger Hiss is no longer stylish, and for that reason alone it is increasingly possible to be interested in Whittaker Chambers without being labeled a fanatic. Indeed, it is quite possible to be interested in Chambers without being particularly interested in the Hiss-Chambers case. The Pumpkin Papers Irregulars continue to meet every Halloween to hash over the succulent ins and outs of prothonotary warblers and Woodstock typewriters, but younger conservatives are more likely to think of Whittaker Chambers as a writer of considerable power and a key figure in the development of modern American conservatism, than as the ex-spy who nailed Alger Hiss.

By contrast, now that the court of public opinion has rendered its verdict on the Hiss-Chambers case and Alger Hiss has finally (*finally!*) run out his legal string, Hiss himself has become less and less intriguing, both as an abstract cause and as a flesh-and-blood person. As a result, *Recollections of a Life*, despite its egregiously offensive blasts at Whittaker Chambers's sanity, comes across rather feebly. Though the old reflexes twitch a bit when Hiss coolly labels Chambers "a psychopath," the impulse to reply quickly resolves itself in mild irritation. It is hard to get too terribly upset over a book filled with lies so few people believe any more. If Alger Hiss dies unhappy, that will surely be the reason why.

Terry Teachout is a member of the editorial board of the New York Daily News *and the editor of* Ghosts on the Roof: Selected Journalism of Whittaker Chambers, 1931-1959, *to be published next year by Regnery Gateway.*

Frontier Justice

by Odie Faulk

***Law and Community on the Mexican California Frontier: Anglo-American Expatriates and the Clash of Legal Traditions, 1821-1846* by David J. Langum, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press; $30.00.**

In the September 1987 issue of *Chronicles*, Jacob Neusner wrote, "To state matters bluntly, if you have to teach in a college in order to pursue the research you wish to undertake, then go, teach." In his "Acknowledgments," Professor Langum admitted doing just that: "I wrote this book over many years and at three different schools, Detroit College of Law, Nevada School of Law, Reno, and . . . Cumberland School of Law, Samford University, Birmingham. All three provided wonderful institutional support in many direct and indirect ways."

The Southwestern humorist-writer J. Frank Dobie once commented that most academic research consists of moving bones from one graveyard to another—meaning that scholars hunt obscurities and then use them to produce academic articles and books which do little more than gather dust in libraries. Langum shows in this work that such does not have to be the case, for this study is a tribute to the relevancy that can be produced through university-subsidized research—and the intellectual excitement that can be generated by poring through dusty archives.

His topic is the law—that body of statutes whereby men try to live together without being at each other's throats. In particular he studied, as his title indicates, Mexican law in California during the period 1821-1846. This is a subject of such obscurity that the result, in the hands of a less thoughtful man, doubtless would have been of interest only to the most dedicated antiquarian. Instead we have here a volume that deserves wide reading for its insights into some of the failings of our modern legal system.

The law has been variously defined. It may be, as Dickens had one of his characters say, "a ass, a idiot"; or perhaps it is, as Sir Edward Coke called it, the "perfection of reason." In the past most legal historians viewed the law as the command of the sovereign. Thus its use—or misuse—depended upon the intent of the state and its rulers. The law could be used to the benefit of society, or it could be used to suppress human rights and human dignity; C.S. Lewis once cynically stated it was his belief that such was the case "among Communists and Democrats no less than among Fascists."

More recently, activists have studied legal history to prove that the law has been a manipulative instrument used by the economic and political establishment to perpetuate its power. And these activists have condemned the law for failing to bring about social, economic, and political change in the direction they feel society should move. Yet they have been among the most active in using the law to bring suit against every level of government and business to effect the changes they want made.

It was with these arguments in mind that Langum produced his study. First he sketches the general history of California prior to the war between the

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United States and Mexico. This is followed by a three-chapter description of the civil and criminal legal structure of California both as actually practiced and as viewed from the local level. Next he details how Anglo-Americans in California were treated by the law. These sections will be of considerable interest to historians.

The third part of the book deals with the conflicts between Anglo and Hispanic legal traditions which caused foreigners to be hostile to the Mexican system as it was practiced in California. In the final section of the book, Langum reviews the ways in which foreigners, who usually were contemptuous of the legal environment in California, handled their legal affairs in this remote Mexican province which was without lawyers. It is the last two sections which will be of most interest to lawyers.

In each section of the volume, the author cites numerous cases to support his contentions. As one who has worked with documents from the Hispanic period of Southwestern history, I applaud the tenacity of research that was necessary before this volume could be written.

Langum argues that the law in California during the Mexican era was inefficient but not corrupt, that it was neither an instrument of power nor of social change. Rather the civil law and the legal environment in California were designed to conciliate disputing parties—to restore harmony and heal the breach in the community and between the parties involved in any dispute. Where conciliation was impossible, community pressure rather than political force (i.e., a sheriff, writs, etc.) was the instrument which compelled adherence to a judicial resolution.

Determining disputed facts, settling the matter of right and wrong, even compensating victims—all were secondary to achieving a reconciliation that hopefully involved face-saving on all sides. In short, the Mexican civil legal system was designed to prevent litigation. The words of José Febrero, a leading Mexican jurist writing in 1851, show this clear intent—and perhaps should be emblazoned above the doors of our present courts:

> The evils that lawsuits cause society, diminishing the fortunes of families and promoting private disputes and interminable discussions, are deterred through our laws by the beneficial object of securing their prevention in their origin. Thus it is that it has been prudently prescribed as a required procedure to initiate lawsuits, that an act be performed through which means authority interposes its office and attempts with discreet observations to conciliate the spirit of the litigants, proposing to them some means of agreement and exhorting them to amiably compromise their differences.

Judge Wapner could not have said it better.

In California, criminal justice involved an arrest, an investigation to determine guilt, and then a community consensus to prescribe a punishment that rarely was the same as that meted out to others committing the identical offense. And the *alcalde* who arrested, investigated, and sentenced was somewhat analogous to a combination sheriff, mayor, and judge.

Americans complained that this procedure deprived them of prompt bail, a trial by jury in which accusers were confronted, and a separation of judicial and executive functions. Moreover, Americans of the years 1821-1846 were too individualistic to appreciate such a system; they called it inefficient and slow—which it was. Yet a close study of all extant criminal dockets in California shows that Americans (and Englishmen) were not singled out for harsher punishments than Mexican defendants.

Thus the conflict in California, in Langum's words, "was between the traditional values and the languid procedures of a pre-industrial, pastoral people and the atomistic, individualist energies of those in the very throes of the Industrial Revolution." The Mexican legal system in California between 1821 and 1846 urged *alcaldes* to make decisions in both criminal and civil cases according to their own judgment of what was right. Almost invariably such decisions reflected community wishes and mores. The intent was to restore harmony, avoid litigation, and reconcile people to living together peacefully. The Californios respected this system, believed in its legitimacy, and obeyed its decrees.

Americans, on the other hand, did not respect this system, thought it lacked legitimacy, and criticized it continuously. Americans wanted certainty and predictability in the law. Their industrial and commercial interests demanded fixed legal rules known in advance to all. Anyone investing large amounts of capital as well as time in rational planning wanted property rights to be recognized, exact, and enforced in an evenhanded way that took no note of individual differences.

One of the foremost merchants in northern California was Thomas Oliver Larkin. He lived in Monterey and from 1843 to 1846 served as American consul. Thus he made frequent reports to Washington of conditions in California and was a regular critic of the legal system there. Then came the American conquest, followed quickly by the introduction of the common law, American courts, and endless litigation. In 1856 Larkin would recall of the Mexican era, with its different legal tradition, "Halcyon days they were. We shall not enjoy there [sic] like again."

Odie Faulk is the author of Arizona: A Short History *(University of Oklahoma Press) and of other standard volumes of Southwestern history.*

Molder of America

by E. Christian Kopff

Uncommon Clay: The Life and Works of Augustus Saint-Gaudens **by Burke Wilkinson, San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.**

Nineteenth-century America was an explosively creative country. It opened up new territories to cultivation and poured forth a cornucopia of technical inventions. Its literature ranged from Hawthorne to Mark Twain, from Whitman to Stephen Foster, and its art included the architecture of McKim, Mead and White and the sculpture of Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848-1907).

Saint-Gaudens's was an art at once outrageously, extravagantly American

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and defiantly classical. His masterpieces (like the Sherman monument in front of the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan or the Diana that once stood on the pinnacle of the old Madison Square Garden) can hardly be understood without an appreciation of their classical roots. As Basil Gildersleeve told his Virginia audience in 1908, "I too would plead for an honest American literature, a literature of the soil, but the classics are in a measure our home, and Kipling quotes Horace as the burial service quotes a verse from a Greek comic poet. It is not a matter of blood, it is a matter of tradition."

Saint-Gaudens wrote of himself, "I always thought I was a kind of cosmopolitan, gelatinous fish; *pas du tout*, I belong in America." Saint-Gaudens is a good example of the American as a citizen of a United States of Europe. He studied in Paris and Rome, and was born of a French father and an Irish mother. His greatest works celebrated the Northern heroes of the Civil War: his Farragut and Sherman in New York, his standing Lincoln in Chicago. His monument to Robert Gould Shaw in the Boston Common gave us our most brilliant relief sculpture, as the traditions of the Arch of Titus return to life to honor the Boston aristocrat who led a black regiment in the war. Near the end of his life, Saint-Gaudens joined with Charles Follen McKim to found the American Academy in Rome, so that the traditions of the ancient world of art and scholarship would be preserved for future Americans.

Burke Wilkinson's tribute is based on much research, and his book has much to say about the artist's movements and emotions and even about his mistress. We get to know those great leaders of American art, Charles Follen McKim and Stanford White, and in Wilkinson's retelling White's shocking murder hits us as hard as it did Saint-Gaudens himself. We see what Europe meant to an American of those days. When Saint-Gaudens returned to America to work on the Farragut monument, his first major commission, he "was so homesick for Rome that he left the faucet running in his studio washbasin to remind him of the tinkling fountain in the Barberini Gardens." (I know the feeling.)

Sadly, the book's weaknesses are many. The author does not write with distinction, his knowledge of history comes from textbooks, and he has little idea of the significance of the Classical past for Saint-Gaudens and his great contemporaries. Wilkinson is best on the wife, friends, and mistress. But to be just, when a more technical work on the artist is published it will owe much to Wilkinson's dutiful collection of evidence. Saint-Gaudens's work still speaks to us, or perhaps rather speaks to us again. I do not think anyone can understand Henry Adams unless he has confronted long and hard the mysterious Adams monument, sculpted to commemorate his wife (never mentioned in the *Education*) who committed suicide. Can we understand our own past until we stare into the faces of the winged Victory leading the wild-eyed Sherman? Saint-Gaudens, like Charles McKim and Basil Gildersleeve, tells us today that the barren spareness of the International Style and Hemingway's prose are not the only options; that a truly American creativity can be built on the Classical traditions of our civilization. That empty feeling in the pit of our stomachs, which we have been taught to call anomie and alienation, is not a fatal cancer. We are just a little homesick for Rome.

E. Christian Kopff is professor of classics at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

The Impossibility of a Book

by Ana Selic

***Pushkin House* by Andrei Bitov, New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.**

Andrei Bitov graduated from the Leningrad Mining Institute but chose to become a writer rather than a geologist. His new novel, *Pushkin House* (the second of his works translated into English), will probably share the "general acclaim" that greeted his short stories in *Life in the Windy Weather*, published a year ago. It is skillful enough to attract attention, and the varied typefaces, unfinished sentences, hints, and empty spaces between the paragraphs will impress snobbish critics with the many different levels of meaning.

Eager literary explorers will have inexhaustible opportunities to draw parallels, to trace sources, and to perform their mental aerobics in essays that fill the pages of magazines specializing in literary theory and criticism.

Bitov's Lev Odoevtsev is the essence of all Russian classical heroes so far—an aristocrat born in Petersburg, with slightly confused ambitions and ideas, partially an idiot (though not a gambler), on the verge of having a duel to the death with his arch-enemy. He is obsessed all the while with a Nastasya Filipovna under a different name. His crucial flaw, however, is to have been born in modern Soviet Russia, thereby ruining his chances for a respectable tragic ending.

Besides intentionally constructing his book on the foundations laid by Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev, and Dostoyevsky—their writings, destinies, and heroes, and their undisputable role in establishing the greatness of the Russian written word—Bitov cannot refrain from further interventions, elaborations, and comments, like a baker convinced that his already rich cake needs an additional cup of sugar.

By serving us Lyova's loves, friends, and power games in one version as well as all the other possible ones, Bitov tries to tell us that in today's Russia not only heroes are killed before they are born, but so is art itself. His final statement about not wanting to deal with his hero anymore because he does not wish him incarcerated in a dusty volume or locked in a determined destiny is meant as a gesture of solidarity with all the possible heroes strangled by the bleak everyday life of his country with its background of labor camps, party secretaries, and mass parades for the nth anniversary of the revolution. But Bitov falls into his own trap: his thesis that such a sequel to greatness both in art and life is more than tragic—that is, his thesis of the impossibility of a book—is an epitaph altogether lost in his weighty volume. After all, there is no proof that the world of imagination has been so depopulated since Bulgakov's times.

Unwittingly, Bitov admits that himself: in this novel there are marvelous passages glowing with life. He gives a

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wonderful sketch of the two Natashas coming from who-knows-where to the spontaneous party at the Pushkin House, Lyova's place of employment. Their hair wrapped in gauze, they sit beside each other on a worn-out sofa pretending not to know why they are there and absolutely refusing to take vodka; instead, they drink their tea from the saucers. Bitov would have done better to trust his own mastery instead of striving for more.

Ana Selic is a freelance writer living in Rockford, IL.

Phi Beta Kappa Fake

by Jane Greer

Most Likely to Succeed: Six Women From Harvard and What Became of Them **by Fran Schumer, New York: Random House; $17.95.**

When I was 11, I saw a photo of the Radcliffe campus in fall, with a beautiful long-haired blonde in a plaid wool skirt sitting on a flight of leaf-covered steps in front of a red brick building. (Fran Schumer saw a similar picture.) A beautiful long-haired blonde is what I hoped to be someday, and I immediately started a savings account in a toy safe labeled "Effilcdar Dnuf" (the words were in code to fool my mother or anyone else who might be snooping around my room). Several weeks later, I blew the whole cache at the swimming pool. Apparently I made a wise decision.

Most Likely to Succeed is a "good read." Fran Schumer is intelligent, insightful, and knows how to laugh at herself and to recognize the folly of all youth. She has a fine way with words and a witty turn of phrase as she takes us through Radcliffe/Harvard 1970-74 (just one year's difference from when I would have been there, had I persevered). We come to know—intimately—Tess, Eleanor, Paige, Daisy, Felicity, and the author, and to watch schools of men swim naked through the co-ed dorms. (" 'I'm surprised grown-ups let us behave like that,' a friend commented in later years.") The girls are all likable, and wacky as can be: prodigies turned loose in Bedlam (Schumer was a freshman at age 16). In the second part of the book, she brings us up to 1984 in the lives of most of these women; one of them killed herself.

Schumer makes me remember what I'd rather forget; the way I felt at the small Midwestern state university I attended but was too immature to analyze. She has captured the administration's quick and incomprehensible willingness to help students trash all norms and accepted values, the children aged 16 to 22 trying without success to get some limits imposed from above, the drinking, the class-skipping, the lethargy, the self-involvement. And the left-winged, Bomb-fearing despair, with no one (except our parents, whom we were there to escape) to suggest that a little hard *work*, a little less self-analysis, might just do the trick. I came to like the young women in this book, and was glad to be reassured that most of them grew up and learned to be happy.

"Six Women From Harvard and What Became of Them": A genuine slice of life, an interesting piece of research, no? No. After I'd finished the book, I read the credits and found this: *"The individuals depicted on the following pages are composite figures, based on my observation of many friends and acquaintances, in college and elsewhere, across a number of years. . . . My aim is not to offer a journalistic account of the period, but to tell a series of stories whose heart and soul are true."* Well, the book's heart and soul may be true, but its guts are phony, and I'm steamed. I'd assumed the names were changed, but now I don't know *what* to believe. *Most Likely to Succeed* is fiction, with a blatantly false subtitle stuck on it. As an account of a real time, a real campus, and real people, it would have been fairly effective journalism. As fiction—and coy, dishonest fiction, at that—it fails because it has no point. Anyone can lump together a bunch of real traits and call the result a "composite"; with a composite and a quarter, you can make a phone call.

Schumer has reported for various newspapers, been an editor at the *Boston Globe*, published fiction in all the right places, won a Goodman Loan Award for fiction, and coauthored Mary Cunningham's best-seller, *Powerplay*. She's a gifted writer, but the line between fact and fiction is not nearly so fine as she pretends here.

Jane Greer is editor of Plains Poetry Journal.

No Water in the Wine

by James L. Sauer

Chesterton, Seer of Science **by Stanley Jaki, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.**

Stanley Jaki, a Catholic priest and a prolific historian of science, has produced a series of scholarly, at times plodding, essays derived from lectures he delivered at Notre Dame. It purports to be the first full treatment of Chesterton and science. He offers us a fair picture of the intuitive genius of Chesterton, whose common and artistic sense allowed him to be both an interpreter as well as a champion of traditional science, while standing as a caustic critic of the eugenicists and those who would direct man's development along "scientific lines."

Chesterton's paradoxical Thomism did not fail him when he dealt with the spirit of modern science and the practical horrors scientific mechanisms can bring forth. As Jaki points out, "Chesterton's chief interest in science always centered on its possible threat to the freedom of the will," that is, to the practical consequences of abstract scientific pontification on the social, artistic, and moral responsibility of being human. To Chesterton the consequences of science divorced from the divine reason from which the world sprang must inevitably result in terrible crimes.

It must be understood that Chesterton was not anti-science; his enemy was scientism. "Scientism, or the claim that only the scientific or quantitative method yields valid knowledge and reliable value judgments," says Jaki, "provoked Chesterton to many devastating and penetrating remarks." Of course, it did not take much to provoke Chesterton to wisdom or at least wit. He rose to battle the giants of the new religion of scientific reason with joyous fervor: Huxley, Spencer, Haeckel, Bradlaugh, and

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Wells. All fell before his happy dialectic.

Chesterton also had a great impact on the subject of evolution. He opposed Darwinism *as a philosophy*. This distinction between the philosophy of evolution and the mechanics of evolution must be kept clear. As Chesterton wrote: "If evolution simply means that a positive thing called an ape turned very slowly into a positive thing called man, it is stingless for the most orthodox; for a personal God might just as well do things slowly as quickly, especially if, like the Christian God, he were outside time."

What Christians cannot hold to, and what is presently the required creed of the religion of science, is the notion of chance evolution: the mindless, irrational, random, spontaneous generation of life and spontaneous generation of intellect. This is the unholy philosophy of evolutionary scientism which denies even the possibility of divine interaction with creation. Ironically, modernists are agnostic concerning the existence of God, but insist that if a God exists, he cannot make waves. "Men in earlier times," Chesterton points out, "said unscientific things with the vagueness of gossip and legend, they now say unscientific things with the plainness and certainty of science." Chesterton again: "It is absurd for the Evolutionist to complain that it is unthinkable for an admittedly unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing, and then pretend itself into anything." As Christ said of another generation of wise fools, they strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

Chesterton rightly understood that the battle is not about evolution, but about the worship of randomness. The war is not about science, but scientific pretense and illogic.

In the end, Jaki suggests that Chesterton's chief contribution to scientific thought lay in his understanding that reality is real—a tautological celebration of the quiddity of things. "Herein lies the principal and lasting relevance of Chesterton for science which dominates modern thought even more than was the case in his day. Since then no one has argued more persuasively on behalf of objective reality as a safeguard of sanity, including the sanity of science." What lies at the core of all Chesterton's writings, and what causes us to pause in admiration, is this incredible sanity. He saw clearly that everything is a miracle.

For this reason, Chesterton was not afraid to celebrate a blade of grass for being a blade of grass; nor did he deny that under the proper circumstances a jug of water might become a jug of wine. But he was firm in suggesting the antediluvian truth that "one must not get the water in the wine," which, after all, is the essence of scientific methodology. Chesterton understood the necessity of boundaries. Modern science has yet to understand that there is something beyond its bounds, and that the ineffable Thing beyond its bounds has no fear of science, or of the puny creatures that send their towers skyward.

James Sauer is director of library at Eastern College in Pennsylvania.

Wings of the Navy

by Wayne Michael Sarf

***Flight of the Intruder* by Stephen Coonts, Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press; $15.95.**

Technology can exalt as well as dwarf the individual. The Great War's machine guns staged a chattering pageant of impersonal slaughter; yet its warplanes brought forth paladins such as Frank Luke, Billy Bishop, and Baron von Richtofen, their decidedly individualistic exploits providing civilian newspaper readers with a pleasant contrast to the muddy anonymity of trench warfare. While the technology of flight has changed—awesomely so—the Lone Warrior mystique endures. Gallant, Anglophilic Argentine jet pilots pummeled British ships while rejoicing in nicknames and mannerisms lifted from old RAF movies, and in the film of Tom Wolfe's *The Right Stuff*, Sam Shepard played test pilot Chuck Yeager as a retrofitted, laconic Westerner (the real hero's subsequent commercial endorsements were a letdown best reserved for mere "celebrities"). Computers and jet-age refinements, far from reducing combat pilots to the dreaded passivity of "Spam in a can"—a fate anticipated by the test pilots chosen to follow a *chimpanzee* as Mercury astronauts—simply underline their elite status in dealing with ever more complicated machinery and split-second decisions.

In the world of fiction, it's the reader who often finds himself swamped by hi-tech. In the first Naval Institute Press megahit, Tom Clancy's *The Hunt for Red October*, many characters were purest plastic—mere hooks on which their creator carefully pinned expensive military hardware on the way to his denouement. And the hardware also threatens to overwhelm Stephen Coonts' Vietnam War novel *The Flight of the Intruder*—at least at first. Bombing and refueling runs feature so much glancing at gauges and screens that we miss the sensations of flight or combat, sea or sky, especially since Coonts sometimes describes instrument activities without forcing us to feel his airmen reacting to them. This is, of course, part of the novel's best-selling appeal, but it soon ceases to intimidate, while Coonts can view such technology with irony. "There must be some mistake," jokes the hero's lady, sitting in his Intruder's cockpit. "This plane is too complicated for anyone to fly." And the book's first death comes when a North Vietnamese peasant hopefully fires his "ancient bolt-action rifle" into the sky—and through a jet's Plexiglas canopy.

Other early shortcomings of this first novel include awkward dialogue and prose and an initially clumsy love interest; but as we progress, Coonts' dialogue and characters become more convincing, his prose smoother, his hero's love genuinely touching. And this hero proves no adolescent *Top Gun* icon: Vietnam War veteran Coonts worries about the man inside the machine.

It is 1972. Lieutenant Jake Grafton flies a carrier-based A-6A Intruder bomber. He likes flying and accepts combat. But now his hands shake—partly because he knows Americans are dying in raids on unimportant, even worthless targets. Voicing a now-familiar complaint ("We could win the war, you know, if they'd let us"), Grafton evolves a plan to launch a vigilante raid on an unauthorized target *worth* destroying. It is a premise that might easily serve a stale Rambo fantasy, but Grafton's exploit proves almost an antihighlight, of far less concern than its contemplative aftermath: When, asks the author, does a fighting

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man have the right, or the duty, to disobey orders he knows to be harming his own country's war effort? *Flight of the Intruder,* unlike so many aerial sagas, isn't in trouble when on the ground—or inside its protagonist's head, as he ponders the morality of bombing.

> What you try to do, Jake thought, is to keep it fuzzy in your mind that you kill real people. . . . You see only silent puffs of smoke sometimes and how could they kill anyone? It's not real. . . . You have bombs and there are no fair fights and you know it's wrong. . . .

Yet it is not merely the deaths, but above all the frustrating *uselessness* of his efforts that threatens his self-control: even the bomber crewmen who destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki could reflect on the peace their efforts had made possible.

The qualities thought necessary in combat pilots are probed. Grafton believes himself "addicted to the adrenaline high of taunting death," fully alive (vague phrase!) only when "naked and running flat out" against SAM's and tracers. If at times this sounds familiar, like a Howard Hawks movie ("In the profession of flying, a man was good enough or he wasn't any good at all . . . "), the otherness of the Indochina conflict taints everything for Grafton, who had expected something "like in the books—knights-in-the-sky stuff," never the *kind* of "absolutely nutty" war he finds. Perhaps, in telling of a Chinese refugee drowned seeking Hong Kong and freedom, Coonts means to foreshadow the results of losing such a war.

Flight of the Intruder offers a climax of grade-A suspense in which—no easy feat—one genuinely worries about the characters' fate. Its biggest shock, however, may be the Virginia-born Grafton's opinion that the great Robert E. Lee was a "traitor" who nevertheless "had a big rep back in Virginia." This appalling heresy might be explained by the fact that the author himself hails from *West* Virginia.

Wayne Michael Sarf is the author of God Bless You, Buffalo Bill: A Layman's Guide to History and the Western Film. *He is presently pursuing a doctorate in military history.*

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Making Love and War

by Judith Chettle

***Talking Across the World: The Love Letters of Olaf Stapleton and Agnes Miller, 1913-1919,* edited by Robert Crossley, Hanover, NH: University Press of New England; $27.95.**

Nearly half a century has passed, yet we continue to be enthralled by World War II. We watch reruns of *The World at War* on PBS, never miss *Casablanca* when it's featured, and can even sit through *The Longest Day* one more time. Not so with World War I, which, though older, was in a sense a more modern war. Where World War II was, to the public, a traditional war, in which the forces of light did battle with those of darkness, the First World War was perceived as a clash of states, not philosophies. Like Vietnam, it had many celebrity pacifists and draft-dodgers; like Vietnam, it left people dispirited and cynical.

Many insights into the attitudes of World War I can be found in the recently published *Talking Across the World*—a collection of letters between an Englishman, serving in France as an ambulance driver, and his sweetheart in Australia. Olaf Stapleton taught working-class adults in Liverpool, but he also wrote books on the history of life, much admired by people like H.G. Wells and the geneticist J.B.S. Haldane. After the war, in the 30's and 40's, he produced scientific romances, which had a considerable following, and are said to have influenced writers like Arthur C. Clarke and Doris Lessing, who regarded him as one of the fathers of modern science fiction.

This collection of letters is as much a conventional love story of two people separated by geography and the exigencies of wartime as a debate between them on the war itself. Olaf, a graduate of Balliol College, Oxford, was reluctant to join up: "I won't go fighting abroad if I can help it, because that is not our business." Agnes, back in Australia, thought it the duty of all who could fight to do so. The argument of pacifism versus war was to continue for the whole duration.

A socialist who intended to devote his life to improving the lot of the working class by teaching and writing, Olaf resolved his dilemma—"I am tired of letting other people fight while I dream"—by joining an ambulance unit organized by the Society of Friends. Though not a Quaker, Olaf's family was affluent enough to be able to purchase an ambulance, which Olaf would then drive for the unit in France.

In January 1915, he was able to write to Agnes and tell her that he had applied for the job. "I won't go unless I can get an essential, strenuous and if possible perilous job; for it would be terrible to feel one was shirking hardship and danger." Ambulance drivers were in fact exposed to enormous dangers. Although they did not bear arms, they came under fire, and many lost their lives in heroic efforts to rescue the wounded. Stapleton and his unit were awarded the *Croix de guerre* by the French government for the services they rendered.

For her part, Agnes sees fighting as a regrettable necessity: "If we could get back all we have lost by any other means than by fighting for it, I would rejoice among the first that no more blood need be shed. Isn't that all we are fighting for?" When Australia held referendums over introducing conscription, Agnes supported the policy: "Why should the generous brave men go do their share while the selfish cowardly shirkers stay at home and do nothing for anyone but themselves? It doesn't seem fair. We all have shares in our country."

The debate between the two never

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turns acrimonious; they do not allow politics to dominate their lives, or their love. The young couple were first cousins who had met when Agnes was a young girl of nine and Olaf was 17. Agnes went home to Australia and did not visit England again until she was 19, but Olaf had retained vivid memories of that earlier visit and was soon in love with her. In their long-distance courtship lies the charm of the letters; one is reminded of *Clarissa*, and the tension that can be evoked in this literary form.

Olaf is certain from the first: "I remember a certain day some ten years ago . . . I, being I suppose, a romantic kid, was wonderfully impressed. It is rather quaint, and a little comic, but from that moment I thought of little else but you . . . and if I did not feel sure, dead sure, that I could be all that you ever want, indeed I would not even try to win your love. But in my heart I know it. I have nothing wonderful to offer you, but because I love you I am made strong enough to do anything and bear anything. You shall see if not so, both you and I will know it. But it is so."

Agnes, who returned to Australia soon after the war broke out, was more hesitant. "I have always talked to you about why we should not be engaged —about Mother, and about being too young and about being so far away in the future, etc., etc. . . . but the one big thing and only thing remains which is that yet I do not really love you. . . . If really I were filled with the fire you are filled with I could be old enough and wise enough and I could speak to conquer Mother and all the world and I could wait a very age." But as the correspondence continues—occasionally interrupted by the sinking of the mailship by enemy ships—Agnes increasingly realizes she is in love, and they become engaged.

Like most women of her day, Agnes is not well-educated, at least not in the academic sense. But she has a good eye and ear. The homey family outings and daily life in Australia, both in Sydney and up in the mountains, are recounted with a beguiling naturalness. By contrast, the intellectual Olaf is initially patronizing in the way he discusses lofty subjects and quotes liberally the great books he reads. As the years pass, however, he comes to admire the simplicity and straightforwardness of her observations and arguments, and apologizes for his arrogance.

His accounts of the war and of his experiences as an ambulance driver are well-written, if familiar. But that verbal facility so suitable to debate and monograph is just too stiff for letters to one's beloved. Only when writing of his feelings or commenting on Agnes' own letters does he relax and write with more ease.

The literature of World War I is a rich and abundant collection, far more distinguished than that of any subsequent war. For the first time war was put under the microscope, and what was seen there was then described by perhaps the best-educated generation ever to fight. And to this examination they brought not only their education, but all the modern impulses that flourished at the beginning of the 20th century: aestheticism, atheism, socialism, and the naiveté that came from too many years of comfortable peace —England had not been in any danger of direct invasion since the Napoleonic wars, over a hundred years earlier. *Talking Across the World* reminds us again of not only that literary heritage, but that of all the many wars of our century, World War I was indeed the Great War, precisely because it was approached and fought with a peculiarly modern sensibility.

Judith Chettle writes from Bethesda, Maryland.

Measured Speech

by William C. Rice

***The Selected Poems: Expanded Edition* by A.R. Ammons, New York: W.W. Norton.**

A maritime artist I know tells me that he once met an eminent critic who claimed to have given up the brush and taken up the pen because he had won all the prizes in art school. Those laurels must be testimony that he was washed up—how could an artist of genuine importance, he despaired, possibly satisfy the reigning tastes of his era?

If the poet A.R. Ammons were to follow the art critic's reasoning, he'd instantly cease composing verse and begin discoursing on, say, "constellations of intention in Ginsberg's early poetry." Ammons has won all the prizes—the Bollingen, the MacArthur, the National Book Award—and holds an endowed chair at Cornell University. Influential literary critics like Harold Bloom of Yale and Helen Vendler of Harvard extoll him.

And yet, improbable as it may seem to those accustomed to challenging the decisions of our literary Supreme Court, we should be thankful indeed that A.R. Ammons has not allowed praise to silence his art. The critics, to my mind, are quite on the mark in calling him one of the very best of our living poets. I would only add what seems to me, these days, just as important: he composes remarkably accessible poems.

Ammons writes from a deep familiarity with the natural world. He is not content simply to offer a moody response to a landscape. He must watch things move and mark the interplay of wild animals, evergreens, hillsides, and man-made objects. This passage from "Viable" shows his eye at work:

> the caterpillar sulls on the hot
> macadam
>
> but then, risking, ripples to
> the bush:
> the cricket, startled, leaps the
> quickest arc: the earthworm,
> casting,
>
> nudges a grassblade, and the
> sharp robin strikes. . . .

As befits a student of nature, Ammons also writes from an awareness of man's physical and intellectual limitations. His poems preach gentle lessons in humility, lessons comparable to those of Chinese Sung landscapes in which temples, bridges, and fishermen are dwarfed, physically and philosophically, by mountains that hover in a distant upper space. In "Staking Claim," Ammons contrasts the autumn flight of willow leaves—"dream-wraiths song-turned,/ bent in troops of unanimity"—with the human mind's conceptual powers. By the end of the poem the two are more alike than different:

> look I said to the willows
> what the mind
> can apprehend,

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. . .
look I said to the leaves
breaking into flocks around me
taking
my voice away
to the far side of the hill
and way beyond gusting down
the long changes

Fortunately, Ammons does not worship nature on bended knee. If he finds spiritual and intellectual satisfaction in his dialogues with mountains, songbirds, and colorful stones, he just as often writes whimsically. Ammons's range of subject and response is a good measure of his talent, but it also reveals a larger incompleteness in his quest. He has not finally discovered the source of his troubles, his reason to write. He may be acknowledging as much in the opening of "Periphery." He complains of "thickets" and of "keeping charts/ of symptoms, every reality a symptom/ where the ailment's not nailed down."

One might, of course, take exception to what sounds here like a prescription for the lazy relativism so common to contemporary American poetry. Add to this the presence of titles like "Conserving the Magnitude of Uselessness," and one might worry that Ammons's success has come at a price. For some readers, no doubt, his work will smell of the lamp, and his treatment of questions of existence will be too tentative or metaphysical. But as I read him, Ammons is in earnest. He relies on the problems and metaphors that nature and experience provide, and he does so in language marked by lucidity and imagination.

Where Ammons satisfies least, it seems to me, is in his handling of poetic form. As I read through *The Selected Poems*, I found fewer and fewer efforts at structured verse. And while his free verse is entirely better than most, his lack of rhyme and sustained meter—which is the very music of poetry—drives even his best writing out of memory. His line divisions follow the fashion of isolating single words without regard for natural pause. While this supposedly startles the reader into a heightened awareness of word meanings, its cumulative effect is to rupture thematic continuity and obstruct the reader's breathing. But rejection of form—or is it simply inattention?—should hardly surprise us in a poet as speculative as A.R. Ammons, and this deficiency by no means spoils the pleasures of this new selection of his work.

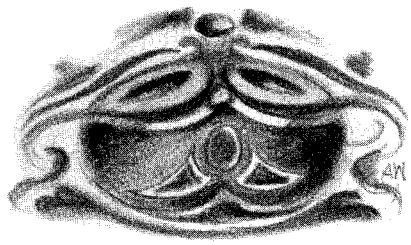
William C. Rice is a graduate student at the University of Michigan.

In Search of Absolutes

by Thomas P. McDonnell

***Fleeing the Whore of Babylon: A Modern Conversion Story* by James J. Thompson, Jr., Westminster, MD: Christian Classics.**

Caveat lector—shortly after glancing through the early pages of James J. Thompson, Jr.'s accurately but flamboyantly titled *Fleeing the Whore of Babylon*, I wondered how in this vale of tears I could complete the job assigned to me by *Chronicles*. How dreadful to contemplate yet another conversion-to-the-One-True-Faith story, this conversion, moreover, from Seventh-Day Adventism. I had recently read the novelist Mary Gordon's account of her own conversion from Mormonism to the Roman Catholic Church and knew that she had since gone hopelessly trendy; besides, give me good solid converts from atheism, agnosticism, and the general European disillusionment.



American sectarians are the toughest. Barely into chapter two, the one entitled "Gonnye" (a juvenile corruption of "Granny," the author's Bible-thumping grandmother and implacable foe of Roman Catholic devils everywhere), I nearly threw the book across the room and decided to tell *Chronicles* I could not handle the job. But it all came to life for me when Thompson emerges from adolescence and makes contact with the world beyond Comus and Takoma Park, Maryland, especially when he himself confesses that Maryland was indeed a rather curious place for his beloved Granny's anti-Catholic animus. When books became extremely important to him, he began to read Chesterton, Belloc, Péguy, Maritain, and at one point says that it was Graham Greene who helped save his life. (A most powerful feat by perhaps the least likely candidate for salvific duties in an otherwise imposing roster of Catholics.)

Be it as it may, from the very beginning of adult consciousness, James Thompson, Jr. was a man in search of absolutes. But a man in search of absolutes is one who, in Jung's theory of individuation, can take a quantum leap towards either the likes of an Adolf Hitler or the more benign fundamentalism of a Jerry Falwell or an Oral Roberts. Instead, Thompson took to the high road of pure abstractionism and sought such idealizations as Southern civilization, laissez-faire capitalism, and finally the Roman Catholic Church. Though all three categories were left relatively unshaken by the encounter, the last of these proved to be the most understanding and receptive. James Thompson, Jr. became a Roman Catholic.

Thompson's journey into certitude was nonetheless shaky for all that. He subsequently found himself in and out of marriage in almost equal parts to his having been in and out of the church and back again. The attraction of Holy Mother the Church (an old preconciliar term) continued to be so powerful, however, that Thompson soon saw himself as one pursued by the dreadful Whore of Babylon that had once haunted Granny's imagination. He has written some nice but rather superficial essays for the *New Oxford Review*, which were later published by Ignatius Press, and which he now admits to have been the products of mere enthusiasm. With this book James J. Thompson, Jr. has obviously matured as a Catholic Christian, though still deprived of the Eucharist because of marital complications and earlier oversights. We are left with a better-than-usual conversion story, and if it still has a long way to go, we wish him exceeding well.

Thomas P. McDonnell is a free-lance writer living near Boston.

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Letter From Batavia

by Bill Kauffman

The Forgotten Fire

"I am on the one hand a kind of New York State Republican, conservative. On the other hand, I am a kind of a Bohemian type. I really don't obey the laws. I mean to, but if I am in a hurry and there is no parking here, I park."
—**John Gardner**

Batavia's wandering native son left this vale of tears fittingly, in a motorcycle accident on a dusty country road near Susquehanna, Pennsylvania. If his shade should return to Batavia, he'll have little trouble finding a legal parking spot in one of the sprawling asphalt maria that border shut-down plants and vacant retail stores. Alas, he'll be lucky to locate a copy of *The Sunlight Dialogues* or *The Resurrection*.

A prophet, the good book reminds us, is ever without honor in his hometown. Even in the Burned-Over District of upstate New York. John Gardner's Batavia (and mine) is a city of 17,000, seat of the county of Genesee, jewel of the empire that the speculator and Declaration-signer Robert Morris sold to the Holland Land Company. We lie at the western edge of New York's Burned-Over District, that fertile swatch of upstate land, stretching from Utica to Buffalo, which blazed with white-hot fanaticisms throughout the first half of the 19th century.

The Burned-Over District incubated a score of social and religious enthusiasms, few of which survived the Jacksonian era. Here in upper York, along what the poet and hardy regionalist Carl Carmer called our "psychic highway," Joseph Smith entertained the Angel Moroni; John Humphrey Noyes preached the Perfectionist creed to his comely disciples at Oneida; Ann Lee's "Shaking Quakers" writhed in celibate ecstasy; Jemima Wilkinson, the "Publick Universal Friend," was worshiped as an incarnation of Christ; Susan B. Anthony took up the equal-rights cudgel; and hundreds of lesser-known prophets and seers and lonely antinomians scorched the ground.

Batavia's contribution to the Burned-Over stew was modest: the old town was home to William Morgan, an apostate Mason whose eagerness to divulge the order's secrets got him tossed into the Niagara River (though probably not over the Falls) in September 1826.

The Burned-Over enthusiasms were pretty well drenched by 1850, yet they bequeathed the region a curious, contradictory legacy. The millenarian firestorms triggered a reaction by the yeomanry: the shrinking band of utopian zealots were gradually swallowed by a conservative majority that clung tenaciously to the eternal verities.

Upstate New York's Civil War experience is instructive. Birthplace of the abolitionist Liberty Party, home to Frederick Douglass and Gerrit Smith, the Burned-Over District helped New York supply the most men per capita to the Union Army. At the same time, New York's Governor, Horatio Seymour of Utica, acted as the North's anti-Lincoln lightning rod—denouncing the draft, the suspension of habeas corpus, and various of Father Lincoln's other infringements upon the Revolutionary liberties.

The principled dissident Seymour was execrated as a traitor. But he remained popular upstate, and his example inspired fellow Utican Harold Frederic to compose a milestone of Burned-Over fiction, his 1893 novella *The Copperhead*. (The book sympathetically describes an upstate farmer whose adherence to Jeffersonian principles leads him into a bitterly anti-Civil War stance. His son deserts him, he is banished from the town's commercial life, hotheads burn down his barn . . . until the Mohawk Valley comes to its collective senses, and the protagonist is readmitted to community life by a chastened town.)

With Frederic's death, a silence overtook Burned-Over tongues, and despite the best efforts of the late folklorist Carmer it grows more oppressive with each passing year. Why are the sons and daughters of the Burned-Over District so timorous in asserting themselves in cultural matters? Is it because we fear the disfavor of Kitty Carlisle Hart, or Billy Joel, or Gordon Lish, or the rest of the downstate defilers of Parnassus? Is it because the last knight to challenge the Manhattan Gorgon, John Gardner (can't you see that beautiful native son, leather-jacketed, white-maned, swilling vodka, roaring down Route 63, gravel spraying in his Harley's wake?) was reviled as the "hippie Moral Majoritarian" after he threw down the gauntlet to the neurasthenic archons of modernism in *On Moral Fiction*?

Or is it because the belletrist is a stranger in this land, a practitioner of a craft that his neighbors view as illegitimate? Carl Carmer threw up his hands in frustration: "To the disgust of the living artist, the Yorker, whether rich or poor, refuses to look upon him as a natural product of the people of his region but insists on regarding him as a biological sport, a not-to-be-expected growth from the soil of upstate civilization."

My theory, for what it's worth, is that the Burned-Over District's artistic void is due to the disappearance of regional patriotism. Up here that word manifests itself as New York City-hatred. Our forefathers, bless their souls, detested the Babylon on the Hudson. (The City of New York, after all, served as a Tory bastion while upstaters were consecrating the Revolution with their blood.)

For whatever reason, that resentment didn't stick. Sure, the Burned-Over populace gets riled up now and then at some downstate outrage, but our boys and girls routinely sell out to

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the enemy. The *Batavia Daily News* recently profiled a local lass who'd risen to stratospheric heights—as secretary to George Bush! Somewhere in nightmarish Northern Virginia her condo doubtless desecrates some Civil War site. She wanted to say hi to all her friends back home, and vouchsafed that she couldn't understand how some lost souls "just stay there."

In saner times, such a turncoat would be pitied by the community. Today, she is emulated. Look! See how this plucky gal overcame her Genesee County upbringing and is at this very moment typing documents crucial to the extension of the American imperium!

Mr. Bush's Burned-Over minion knows well that moment at which the exiled colonial faces a choice: abandon the province and pledge allegiance to the metropolis, or dig in your heels in defense of a home and a culture that elite opinion has encouraged you to renounce. For most choosing expatriation, home recedes quickly, until it becomes nothing more than a joke. (Western New York-born choreographer Michael Bennett: "Buffalo and suicide are synonymous." Ha ha.)

How does one revive a long-dormant regionalism? Loyalties to towns, villages, counties exist, but any greater regional awareness has vanished. There is no Burned-Over sectional character, just as there is no extant Burned-Over literature. The footsteps of Frederic and Gardner and the anti-Masons are obscured by time and indifference; even the most ancestor-minded Burned-Over son will have trouble finding his way.

A few gusts of anti-urbanism still whistle through the district, though they are pooh-poohed by provincial elites and ignored by New York's mandarins. When the upstate serfs roared protest over his mandatory seat-belt law, Governor Cuomo dismissed the opposition as "NRA hunters who drink beer, don't vote, and lie to their wives about where they were all weekend." (High wit from a man who sees St. Francis of Assisi's imprint all over the Department of Health and Human Services.)

For a time, the Attica prison riot of 1971 cleaved the state along geographic lines. As refracted through the New York City media lens, Atticans appeared to be gap-toothed inbreds just aching to join some hillbilly lynching party. When Governor Rockefeller ordered the storming of the prison, killing 11 hostage-guards and 32 inmates, Attica forever after became a byword for racism.

Lost in all the bloviating postmortems was the social and sectional significance of Attica. In the Burned-Over District, the inmates are not seen as the prime villains in the Attica riot. Most locals were aware of the squalid conditions inside the prison, as well as the occasional brutality of some guards. The real criminal was the hated Rockefeller, symbol of the inexorable forces of downstate tyranny. The dead, said a relative of one murdered guard, were killed with "a bullet that had the name Rockefeller on it."

Tom Wicker, back in the days before a legion of "researchers" wrote his lifeless copy, backhandedly commemorated Wyoming and Genesee counties with *A Time to Die*, his account of Attica. Wicker's impressions are about what you'd expect from a cultural turncoat: when apprised of his assignment to Attica, he whines that he's being sent to "such a remote part of New York territory." When he witnesses a hysterical woman berating black Buffalo Assemblyman Arthur Eve, he chalks her rage up to "the drudge life in Alexander, New York." When he sups (to satiation, I would guess), he can't help "watching cheerful Batavians enjoying themselves at the local hot-spot," which, yuk yuk, turns out to be "a bowling-alley restaurant."

They filmed ole Tom's book a couple years back, and an attractive girl of my acquaintance—a lifelong Geneseean—sought a spot as an extra. She didn't make it. "Not hick-looking enough," the Hollywood casting person told her.

Predictably, Burned-Over influence on state politics has dwindled to nil over the last century. No one much cares. Oh, the seat-belt law still rankles, as do the tax and bond referenda that the corporate-state managers sneak onto the ballot (in indecipherable prose, to discourage voters from reading 'em). But why get involved in politics? Downstate dominates the ever-widening public sphere, resistance is generally futile, and statewide elections are a joke. As an alternative to managerial state Democrats from New York City, the GOP offers millionaire suburban patroons from Long Island or Westchester County, take your pick. Most sensible folk don't.

Still the embers in the Burned-Over District do erupt into glorious flames at fitful intervals—witness last winter's heroic fight by the citizens of Wayne County to save it.

The protagonists of Progress and Privilege, i.e., Saint Mario, the Chamber of Commerce, and Albany's swollen bureaucracy, betook a flashy effort to attract the multibillion-dollar supercollider boondoggle to Wayne, the second-largest apple-producing county in the country. (The supercollider is the perfect Reagan-era public work: subsidized employment for upper-middle-class white engineers.)

More than 12,000 acres of land, much of it devoted to apple orchards, were to be destroyed. As many as a thousand homes were to be razed. The Hill Cumorah, a sacred Mormon site, was to be sacrificed to the Moloch of science.

In an instant, the Wayne precinct of the Burned-Over District was ablaze. The governor was hung in effigy. The lieutenant governor, a token upstater from Jamestown, a turncoat quisling collaborating student council president of a man, was spat upon. The jellyfish pols, sensing that the Cuomo/Chamber of Commerce juggernaut was encountering fierce and potentially violent opposition, jumped ship, the slimy lot of them burbling about nature's pristine beauty, the will of the people, blahblahblah. Remarkably, the state gave in. The supercollider would have to profane some other site, in some other state.

Secession is the obvious remedy. The prospects for a severed New York are actually far brighter than exist in any other state. As recently as the late 1960's, Norman Mailer and Bella Abzug were proposing statehood for New York City. Mailer made secession the keystone of his 1969 mayoralty campaign, though Brooklyn's bard of fugging slighted the prospect of gaining upstate support for a split: "While the separation could hardly be as advantageous to New York State as it would be for the city, it might nonetheless begin the development of what has

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been hitherto a culturally undernourished hinterland, a typically colorless national tract."

Unlike, say, Flatbush.

At all events, secession is an excellent idea that ought to be revived. Gothamites can keep the name "New York," which always struck me as an aristocratic hand-me-down appellation anyway. Perhaps we'll opt for Genesee, or Iroquois, or some other apt old Indian name. We'll even give Long Island and Westchester to the new urban state, to keep *New York Times* editors, equestrian competitors, and minimalist fiction writers from littering our landscape.

Someday—soon I hope—the sons and daughters of the Burned-Over District are going to learn the pyrographic skills of their ancestors. Foreigners may assume that the arrayed forces of city and state will be too much for a gang of backwoods and hick-town fire-eaters, but consider this: Gordon Lish and Nelson Rockefeller are on their side, but John Gardner and the Angel Moroni are on ours.

Bill Kauffman's first novel, Everyman a King, *is forthcoming from Soho Press.*

Letter From the Volunteer State

by William R. Hawkins

The New Racism on Campus

Having done four years of graduate work at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, I was distressed to learn that there, as elsewhere, a few radical activists can rout a weak administration and faculty by crying "racism." Last February a special Task Force on Race Relations released a report to justify the subordination of education to racial politics at UT-K. The task force had been appointed by Chancellor Jack Reese at the request of the UT Commission for Blacks. In early May, Reese accepted virtually all of the report's 22 recommendations.

The report claimed to find "lingering vestiges of racism" at UT-K, yet it had to look hard to find any evidence. The only campus incident cited was the yelling of "racial slurs" by fraternity members at a black student for repeatedly taking a shortcut through their hedge and across their lawn. Unfortunately, you can hear enough profanity and slurs on any campus, used by members of all races and sexes. Had the trespasser been white, curses just as insulting would have been found and used, for it was the act, not the actor, that triggered the outrage.

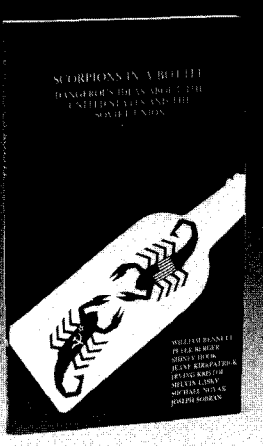
The report branded white students "apathetic" as well as "hostile" to blacks—thus classifying as racist the vast majority of whites who accept blacks without a second thought. Mere acceptance does not exhibit sufficient "sensitivity": whites must take "affirmative action" to prove that they no longer harbor racist thoughts.

The faculty was found to be just as guilty. The task force had to find some way to explain why black students on average have lower grades than whites. Alleging a racist plot is easier than admitting the dismal condition of urban schools, the sociopathic street culture, or the high incidence of broken homes in the black community—all factors affecting academic performance long before college is reached.

Among the proposals the chancellor accepted are "sensitivity training programs" to educate the public to the special needs of blacks—the public in this case being all white students and their parents, the faculty and staff, and businessmen and community leaders of Knoxville. These propaganda exercises will be put together by the director of Affirmative Action, the Commission for Blacks, and the Black Faculty and Staff Association. Reese also endorsed new efforts to improve the attitudes of the faculty toward black students. Under pressure from the administration, the faculty senate had already agreed to begin the curious task of holding discussions to "confront" their alleged "insensitivity" towards minorities.

Reese declined to call for mandatory courses in Afro-American studies, as the task force demanded. Since UT-K already has a battery of such courses and since students need only a total of six

SCORPIONS IN A BOTTLE:
DANGEROUS IDEAS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION



Moral Equivalence. Glasnost. Find out how these notions are a deadly threat to the West in essays by William Bennett, Peter Berger, Sidney Hook, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Irving Kristol, Melvin Lasky, Michael Novak, and Joseph Sobran, produced from the Hillsdale conference profiled in *Time* Magazine.

"If they were two far-off and equally dangerous giants, two, I think the imagery is, 'scorpions in a bottle.'"
Midge Dector, Executive Director
Committee for the Free World

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courses from history, geography, economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, religion, and philosophy, obviously a mandatory minority culture course would leave them shortchanged.

But he did endorse the interesting demand that "all University courses reflect the multiracial and multicultural character of American society." Trying to stake out a middle ground between the "rigid dichotomy" he saw in the debate over the Western civilization course at Stanford, Reese announced that UT-K would be "dedicated to intellectual and cultural diversity," which means that students will find the already meager ration of their own heritage further diluted in the new "melting pot" of global relativism.

To his credit, the chancellor refused the task force requests for the creation of a vice-chancellor for minority affairs and a UT Civil Rights Commission, noting that the university already had a Commission for Blacks, a Commission for Women, and an Adaptive Living Committee. But the bureaucracy will continue to bloat. The task force encouraged black students to file complaints against white students and professors through the campus Ombudsman and Affirmative Action offices—something the chancellor said the university would promote. Reese also saw a "great deal of merit" to establishing one more radical watchdog: the Race Relations Institute that the task force had asked for. Reese thought that such an institute could "set a new tone for national discussion" and "would be a powerful symbol for the University."

It is clear from these actions that the aim of the university is not to create a color-blind environment, but to resurrect racism by pushing race and race-consciousness as the dominant factor in educational policy.

When, for instance, the UT-K political science department picked a woman scholar of national reputation as its new chairperson, the choice was rejected by the administration. The nominee was white. The selection committee was taken away from political science and placed under a black activist professor from another department; the new committee's choice of a black poli-sci chairman was accepted by the administration without question. According to faculty sources, this same "reverse discrimination" has been followed in other departments and at the law school. And now the chancellor has accepted the report's recommendation for an even stronger bias in hiring.

The report also called for "special attention" to be paid "to all University awards, both honorary and achievement-based" regarding the "presence and participation of blacks." Although protesting that UT-K was already "sensitive" to this, Reese accepted the recommendation with a pledge to show even more "sensitivity" in the future. The task force then recommended that administrative and academic personnel be evaluated for promotion and tenure according to how well they implement these "affirmative action" programs—a policy that many faculty members believe has been administration practice for several years. As a final measure, Reese said he will ask the Commission for Blacks to make "at least" an annual evaluation of how the university is doing meeting its objectives.

Any notion of rewarding people on the basis of merit alone has been abandoned. Michael Harris, a black activist professor of religious studies, testified before the task force on October 28, 1987, "So when you see the word 'qualifications' used, remember this is the new code-word for whites." The administration has conceded this premise. Throwing out the pursuit of individual excellence, it is dividing the campus into competing groups. Appointments, awards, promotions, grades, and money are to be based on membership in a particular ethnic group. Blacks will not only gain higher pay and benefits, faster promotion and tenure as a result of affirmative action, but radical blacks will obtain institutional benediction for their preaching on the entire range of political issues.

William R. Hawkins is the economics consultant to the US Business and Industrial Council and a columnist for the USBIC Writer's Syndicate.

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Reservations Required

This month I'm writing from the lower right about what works out to be the far left: San Francisco. (My first visit, not long ago, with wife and daughter. OK, lots of people have been to San Francisco. Some even live there. But they're not writing this column.)

Let's give credit where it's due: the food is great. We ate Chinese, naturally (my 14-year-old a little doubtful about green-lipped mussels, but she's a sport). Thai, Korean, and Vietnamese we can get around here—those cuisines are as common as Big Macs in Fayetteville, NC, home of Fort Bragg and innumerable war-brides and camp-followers—so we skipped them for food from places where the Airborne hasn't been yet: Indian, Persian, and Ethiopian.

Sam Francis said once—we were eating in an Afghan restaurant in DC at the time—that whenever a Third World country falls to the communists a new cuisine blooms in Washington. In San Francisco the same refugees face stiffer competition and a more discerning clientele, and the results are definitely worth writing home about.

We even went to the mother church of "California cuisine," Chez Panisse in Berkeley. I wanted to check out the original of what every mesquite-grilled monkfish with kiwi fruit and goat cheese fern-bar in Piedmont, North Carolina is imitating. I figured not going would be like avoiding ribs in Memphis, crawfish in New Orleans, or barbecue in Goldsboro, so I did my duty—and enjoyed it. Seems I only break out in hives when I run into the same thing in Raleigh. No reason California shouldn't have its own cuisine, and I don't think I'd mind it even in Raleigh if it were plainly just another kind of foreign restaurant. After all, I like Thai food in Fayetteville partly because it's exotic. The problem with the California stuff is that it won't *stay* exotic.

Anyway, still in the let's-be-fair department, the San Francisco Bay really is as beautiful as everybody says. I'm a pushover for the combination of steep hills and big water, and the fog is a definite asset, rolling in and out of the

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Golden Gate like God's own lava lamp; every prospect pleases.

But man is vile in ways that are downright startling to a boy whose vices run to S&D (smoking and drinking). Of course, even without its most notorious deviants the place would be . . . strange. In Marin County, where BMW's and New Age thought seem to coexist comfortably, I kept running into people who made me want to go out and find a baby seal to club. All I can say is that Cyra McFadden wasn't far off the mark in *The Serial*—which, if you haven't read it, you should, if only for the character who is regarded as an intellectual because she has *two* M.A.'s (one in sociology and one in macramé).

Across the bay in Berkeley, the graffiti are a healthier mix than they used to be: one Maoist poster had been defaced with "666" (the Mark of the Beast, of course) on Mao's forehead. But the notorious People's Park has become an encampment for the deranged, the drug-addled, and the just plain shiftless, a depot for human debris swept westward by less tolerant communities to a place where there really *is* a free lunch, and supper, too. Berkeley being what it is, these vagrants are politically organized, demanding what they're urged to think of as their rights from a community they seem to have thoroughly buffaloed. (Somebody said once that there's nothing wrong with liberal guilt; they just feel guilty about the wrong things.)

Of course, California was strange even before the 60's; a great Berkeley house reminded us of that. The former "Temple of the Wing" was originally built without walls, a sort of colonnaded platform on which folks lived and (I gather) ate nuts and berries. It has walls now, but it still commands a marvelous view of the bay, and the ghost of Isadora Duncan haunts the place. The same architect did the University of California faculty club building, a splendid Aztec-Oriental hunting-lodge sort of affair. A while back there was a movement to remove the mounted animal heads that decorate the dining room on grounds of anti-speciesism or some such twaddle, but common sense prevailed for a change.

The point is that there's a lot to marvel at in the Bay Area without even mentioning homosexuality. Let's get that on the record. But what's truly distinctive about San Francisco, obviously, is that it has become the Rome, the Moscow, the Salt Lake City of inversion.

The generally accepted estimate seems to be seventy-five to one hundred thousand homosexual men (and I'm talking about men here: the city's lesbians are less conspicuous)—concentrated enough and organized enough to make virtually a city of their own, one as large, as diverse, and potentially as complex as, say, Durham, North Carolina. Most cities have gay bars, but San Francisco has homosexual newspapers, restaurants, stores, churches, choirs, marching bands—even a gay Lions Club and, according to the Anti-Defamation League, a cell of gay Nazis (and doesn't *that* context make that adjective unfortunate?).

One result is that San Francisco is now the place that comes to Middle American minds when the subject of homosexuality comes up—and homosexuality is increasingly what comes to mind when the subject of San Francisco comes up. When a dowager confessed in a conversation about grandchildren that she'd never be a grandmother because "my son, you know, has moved to San Francisco," nobody had to ask what she meant. Even Rice-a-Roni, "the San Francisco treat," is getting nervous—dropping that tag, I read, apparently because market research has found that many now associate the words San Francisco with buggery and death.

That's not fair, of course—no more fair than the listener who wrote *All Things Considered* to say that the Southern accent of one of the program's contributors made her think of the oppression of black people. But once a stereotype gains momentum, people begin to notice what they expect to notice.

My expectations for San Francisco had been shaped by a recent reading of Armistead Maupin, an expatriate North Carolinian who has become sort of the Charles Dickens of gay San Francisco. *Tales of the City* and Maupin's subsequent books are fluff so lightweight that I'm surprised they haven't been turned into a TV sitcom along the lines of *Three's Company* (it's tempting to say that his sure touch with brand names reflects some arch, campy sensibility, except I recall that Ian Fleming used the same gimmick), but they present an oddly touching portrait of the exhilarating, aren't-we-wonderful, pre-AIDS San Francisco gay life, with that life very much at the heart of what the city is about.

It's possible, of course, for an innocent to visit San Francisco without particularly noticing any of this. I don't think my daughter, for instance, picked up on the young male tourists at the airport or even on the gay ghetto of the Castro district as we drove through it. She could hardly ignore the pathetic, drunken, old drag queen she encountered downtown or the large "USE CONDOMS" signs on the backs of city buses, but she left San Francisco pretty much as she came to it, with a romanticized view of city lights appropriate for a provincial lass of her age and station.

The strange thing is that my San Francisco friends don't seem to notice, either. It's not so much that they're tolerant as that they've become desensitized; they seem just to tune out the ubiquitous evidence of the homosexual presence. I really don't want to gross readers out here: let's just say that the kind of thing that gives sodomy a bad name is hard to avoid.

Yes, of course, most heterosexuals wouldn't care to be characterized by the evidence of Times Square's movie marquees, store-window displays, and newsstands. But homosexuals are *defined* by what they do to one another, sexually. It's the major thing they have in common. So naturally their most readily identifiable manifestations have to do with sexual activity.

But they also have in common its consequences, so something else they share, now, is the shadow of death from AIDS. The AIDS crisis, which remains largely theoretical around here, was very much in the news out yonder. Obituaries presented a steady drumbeat of young lives cut short: the wages of sin, to be sure, but a dirty trick on those who believed the promise of sexual "freedom." The condom ads on city buses may help to promote "safe sex"—although of course the only really safe sex is with a faithful partner, and they say a good man is hard to find. In any case, for many, it's too late. Bay Area personal advertisements sport

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a macabre addition to designations like "SWM" (single white male, for the sheltered): "PWA," for person with AIDS. Truth in advertising of a grisly sort.

Homosexuals' continuing fear of persecution, however well-founded, has led them into some strange and even deadly political behavior. The same fear has made them, like some ethnic minorities, bloc-voters when issues implicate their peculiar interests. Those issues don't come up in most towns I know, and the homosexual bloc vote wouldn't amount to much if they did, but in San Francisco those 100,000 single-issue voters can make politicians grovel, as some mayoral candidates were doing when I was there. The political upshot is that San Francisco strikes me as almost unique, for the time being anyway, in the extent to which its homosexual population is treated with at least the semblance of respect: just another tile in the mosaic, just one of many "communities" with its own culture, symbols, and special interests.

What should other Americans make of this, if anything? Some, obviously, see San Francisco as a model of tolerance that we all should copy. Others would like to test the neutron bomb on it. For my part, I think San Francisco's accommodation shouldn't be emulated, but ought to be tolerated. I don't conclude that just because I'm a communitarian anarchist who tries to be consistent (although I am and I do). In general, local differences do make this a more delightful country. Also, in most respects, I don't see why a Southerner should care *what* San Franciscans do, so long as they do it out there and their ways remain a clearly labeled import in our parts. On the other hand, as I said, Californianisms do seem to be contagious, and we're not talking here about cuisine. I'm no extremist in the defense of liberty, much less libertinism.

Basically I think San Francisco ought to be left alone in its peculiarities because setting one or two American cities aside as something like reservations has a lot to be said for it—and maybe I'll say it in a later column, when I feel like being abused both by people who think homosexuality is an abomination to be suppressed at any cost and by those who think it's just an alternative life-style that should be known and accepted everywhere. Reservations haven't worked very well for Indians, but some such settlement may be the best of the bad choices we've got in this troublesome case.

John Shelton Reed writes from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and admires the Tenth Amendment.

Letter From the Heartland

by Jane Greer

The Candidate

She's embarrassing and unpredictable, known as a "gadfly" and a "maverick" (among other names). She admits she's never been a joiner. She has alienated both political parties and the Minnesota media. There are no topics on which she doesn't have a strong opinion and no circumstances under which she would *stifle* any opinion. One cringes to think of her at dinner with heads of state. Fortunately, it will never happen.

But much of what Republican presidential candidate Mary Jane Rachner *says* is what decent, middle-class Americans mutter daily in the privacy of their homes or to friends.

Rachner, 66, is a retired Minnesota schoolteacher with a Ph.D. in education and not a lick of political expertise—although God knows she's tried. She was a "smart-ass" anti-Vietnam Democrat until Reagan swept her off her feet eight years ago, and has run *un*successfully for a number of local and national positions, including US senator. This year, to honor Reagan and help perpetuate what he started (which Bush wouldn't do, she figured), she pursued the presidency. No one has written to thank her.

North Dakota holds the latest primary in the nation—on June 14—and Rachner gave it a try (she skipped the Minnesota primary), gathering 300 signatures by herself in Fargo and at the state Republican convention in Bismarck to get on the ballot. She missed by fewer than 200 votes, or one-half percent, getting what she needed: 6 ½ percent of the vote, which would have given her one delegate and a trip to the national convention. Still, in a race in which George Bush's nomination is a foregone conclusion, getting 6 percent of the primary votes in a highly Republican state says *something*, Rachner feels, and probably more about George Bush than about her.

She had at least two reasons for wanting to be in the North Dakota "race." One is that her mother and maternal grandfather were North Dakotans, and such ephemeral alliances seem to mean more up here than they do in many other regions. (In a recent news release she said, "I'm channelling for my [dead] grandmother . . . great-aunt . . . and mother, all of Bismarck, North Dakota. They came to me in a vision and said, 'Go for it!' They said, 'There are no New Yorkers or Californians channelling from up here. They're channelling from the other place!'")

Another reason she ran in North Dakota is that she wanted "to make the point that North Dakota exists, to draw attention to the Midwest and its importance." It wasn't important to most candidates; the Associated Press described it as a "meaningless" primary, and North Dakota's secretary of state said it was "worthless." Bush had, understandably, declared weeks earlier that the primary season was over—which may have cost him 6 percent of the votes. Besides him, Rachner faced only Texas Libertarian Ron Paul on the North Dakota ballot. Mike Dukakis didn't run.

The drive behind her candidacy is that "nobody else will stand up for normality." Rachner says that psychologists and sociologists have "trashed the word 'normal.' They've said that whatever is possible is normal. . . . What we've created is . . . a prodigal son society" in which people are rewarded for doing wrong. She writes of the pervasive damage of what she calls the "psycho-educational-industrial complex," which manipulates public concern over such problems as child abuse and AIDS, and is "driven by greed for federal money" to magnify the problems and ultimately make them worse. "When you earmark evil, you increase it a hundredfold," she says. Take teen pregnancies. Take crime. Take homelessness.

The North Dakota primary was her second and last. Her first was in New

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Hampshire, where she spent $7,000 of her own hard cash to finish second among the GOP fringe candidates, with 120 votes. (Lyndon LaRouche, the Libertarian on the Democratic ticket, received only 24 more votes than she did.) Rachner blew all her money in New Hampshire because someone promised her she'd be included in a CBS *48 Hours* special report on the fringe candidates. The program fell through, and to economize she teamed up with a willing Democratic candidate who happened to have a car. For three days, she said, "I'd steer all the Democrats to him, and he'd send the Republicans to me." This kind of pragmatic, oddball relationship is typical of Rachner, who isn't good at following rules. It worked out particularly well in New Hampshire because the Democrat was conservative and strongly pro-life, as she is.

(Rachner tried to get on the Nebraska primary ballot, but failed. "I had called Kelly Girl to help me get petition signatures," she told a *Minneapolis Star Tribune* reporter. "I got to Lincoln and this guy wearing dangly earrings came up and said he was the Kelly Girl who was there to help me. I should have known, in this day and age. . . . I think he might have messed up and that's why I didn't get on the ballot.")

Rachner ran into trouble with a North Dakota billboard company in May when she tried to buy space for her anti-homosexual campaign. She had a contract with a local company to put up the messages in five of the state's largest cities, but when the company received her billboards, which had been made up in Minnesota, it just couldn't go through with the deal. The manager of the Bismarck branch said that the contract gave the company the right to refuse to place offensive messages ("Stamp Out Homosexuality"). Rachner thinks the North Dakota Republicans had a hand in the plot, but they deny it—except to note that Rachner's personal logo looks uncomfortably like the National Republican Party's logo.

("My elephant is . . . much, much prettier [than the party's logo]," Rachner says. "My elephant has a rose in its trunk and is wearing a crown made up of reversed R's. The R's stand for Republican, Rachner, and Reagan-ite." In a recent interview she compared the president, whom she idolizes, to Yorkshire pudding, and herself to a popover: "President Reagan has more experience; I have 'air bubbles,' blanks in my experience.")

At a news conference in Bismarck, Rachner said that ridding the world of homosexuality would for her be a goal "like getting rid of murder and war" (although rest assured she's big on SDI). Homosexuality is a crime, she said, adding that we "need a law that defines anal intercourse as rape," not just as protection against the spread of AIDS but also because of homosexuality's threat to "public health and sanity." Many of her prepared news releases use the word "rape" in place of the odious "gay sex." One release states that warning people to be careful whom they sleep with isn't enough: "Those who already look crazed and brain-damaged can be spotted, but many carriers still look normal."

So what does she have against the clearly if not obsessively heterosexual George Bush? Nothing personal; it's just that "he isn't saying anything," and that he's too elite. "George Bush is a country-clubber. I'm a K-Mart Republican, like most of them," she says.

The Republican Party, according to Rachner, has become as doggedly pro-homosexual and pro-feminist as the Democrats. Is this news? When she ran for the US Senate, she says, "I took 'lessons' from the Republican National Committee on how to be a congressional candidate, and they were very upset when I asked a question about homosexuality. I was invited into a little windowless room, and three men came in and made it clear that I should drop that subject."

She chuckles and adds, "For an example of a good political speech you'd think they'd have a video of Reagan, but no, they had a video of Ted Kennedy."

What, precisely, did this woman with air bubbles in her experience hope to achieve with her candidacy? A fairly respectable writer (she's been published in *The American Spectator*), she rambles on the phone and at news conferences. Still, she manages to convey that she just wants to do some good. "I'm past the age when people care about fame and fortune," she says. "I ran for president for my own mental satisfaction that *something* honest had been done in the realm of getting a president elected. There's been enough hypocrisy."

Yes, but what *specifically* did she hope to accomplish? Basically, it amounted to making sure that George Bush didn't get nominated on the first ballot in New Orleans. If she'd gotten her 6 ½ percent in North Dakota (she won no delegates in New Hampshire), at least one first-ballot vote would have had to go to Rachner, whose chances of getting some national media coverage would increase dramatically and—she had hoped—influence, at least slightly, the choice of a vice-president and the party platform.

She'd like the vice-presidency to be more of a "co-presidency" or "twin-presidency," with the vice-president as someone who would form a team with the president and promise to leave office when he did. "It's important this year to switch to a twin-presidency [because] it's the only way to save the public from the adolescent speculation about pillow talk which the media insists on using in order to turn wives into co-presidents. It is the president's spouse, not his vice-president, who should be silent. I would be the perfect co-president because, having no husband, I would be my own spokesperson and I would probably sleep with my dog. The dog would be quoted, of course, but only as an unnamed White House source."

Rachner has fantasies like all the rest of us, and leaves no doubt that if nominated she would have run and if elected she would have served. (Someone once said that if *any one* of us received a phone call begging us to run for president, we'd feign surprise but in our hearts wonder why it had taken them so long.) As president, Rachner would, she says, nominate Ronald Reagan to the US Supreme Court, issue voter identification cards so that people could vote easily from wherever they are, withhold voting cards from criminals, and fine every non-voting citizen $100 as a contribution to reducing the national debt. Federal money to gay and lesbian rights groups, even for AIDS education and testing, would stop: "That's like giving money to a pornographic magazine in order to stop pornography." Under a 27th Amendment to the Constitution, par-

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ents would have the right "to sue any local, state, or federal government for funding a school which might damage their child's character, morals, personality, patriotism, or religious belief." Rachner would offer a choice of Cabinet posts to a catholic array of conservative Republicans, including Jeane Kirkpatrick, Oliver North, Phyllis Schlafly, Jack Kemp, Pat Robertson, Pete DuPont, Linda Chavez, Robert Bork, and Ed Meese, and—a maverick again—would "offer Jesse Jackson an anti-drug czar post." The first people she'd fire would be C. Everett Koop and Otis Bowen.

Rachner would "empower employers to discriminate against hiring in full-time positions" any mothers of children under the age of seven. ("Never underestimate the power of simplistic phrases repeated over and over," she writes in a satirical dialogue between two liberal congressmen. "Concentrate first on the discontented. At first you will get only women who are already unhappy, those who are eaten with jealousy and feel left out. Eventually, you can use these women to influence their more contented sisters with simplistic advice like, 'Be your own person,' 'Be good to yourself,' 'Fulfill your potential.' Soon the fashionableness of career commitment will drive women to earn and to spend, and they won't realize where the money's going. They'll even be grateful to . . . liberal politicians and call [them] their advocates. And [the politicians] will get more PAC money from big business because [they're] turning mothers into a pool of cheap labor.")

She would allow employment discrimination for health, gender, age, moral character, personality, physical strength, attitude, and IQ—but not race. She would be outspoken in her opposition to what she describes as "the goofy, sado-masochistic, anal penetration which journalists, Democrats, and the entertainment industries of Hollywood and New York choose to call 'sex' and even insist on describing with the adjectives 'gay' and 'normal.'" She would bring to an end the Democrats' "gigantic bureaucracy" with which they "coddle and care for a subculture of wastrels, ghouls, vagrants, and perverts."

Newspaper reporters and columnists tell her they think she's a kook. She explains—patiently, ploddingly, I imagine—that the media consistently censor her opinions, and that only by producing "hot copy" does she have a chance to get some coverage. Doesn't every terrorist and nightclub entertainer know this? "If I get enough attention as a kook, and someone takes down a little bit of what I say, perhaps a glimmer of truth gets through," is how she puts it. She's willing to spend her own cash to take the chance.

Here's what all of her voluminous writing and speaking *seem* to boil down to: "If I had Frank Fahrenkopf's job [as head of the National Republican Party], I would point out to the nation's Republican candidates the simple fact that most American homes have rules which all members of the family obey. Certain rudenesses are not tolerated. Isn't our country the *home* of all its residents? Don't we have a right to say that certain rudenesses and ridiculous forms of behavior will not be tolerated in the United States of America?"

One would hope so—but apparently only a kook would *say* so.

Jane Greer will flip a coin on November 8.

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LAW

The Grove City Horror Show

by Edward D. Snow Jr.

Civil rights activists called Rev. Jerry Falwell "hysterical" for claiming that the recently passed Civil Rights Restoration Act could require churches to hire a "practicing, active homosexual drug addict with AIDS to be a teacher or youth pastor." His claim was dismissed as a ploy by a televangelist to squeeze more money out of a frightened flock. But Falwell's scenario is more easily realized than you might think.

Promoters of the Civil Rights Restoration Act have promised churches and church-owned schools religious exemption, and they may be tempted to take solace in that. But given some recent legislation and court decisions, they should be prepared for federal discrimination lawsuits filed by a civil rights establishment which increasingly views their beliefs as archaic superstitions—ones which prevent millions of Americans from being brought into the "enlightened" world of the popular secular morality embodied in the "new civil rights."

The vehicle for these lawsuits will again be the federal money which permeates every segment of American society. Until 1984, private schools had to comply with the major civil rights legislation only if they accepted direct federal money in the form of grants and contracts. Schools like Hillsdale College and Grove City College were exempt because they took no direct aid from the government.

That all changed when the Supreme Court ruled (in *Grove City College* v. *Bell*) that *indirect* federal money, in the form of federally guaranteed student loans and PELL grants, brought Grove City's student finance department under the federal civil rights laws.

Not content with that new interpretation of federal support, civil rights activists introduced the Civil Rights Restoration Act. The act prohibits discrimination throughout an entire institution, even if only one department receives federal aid.

Between 1984 and 1988, conservatives sought to stall the Restoration Act or, failing that, to narrowly define the term "federal money." They did not succeed. With the addition of an abortion-neutral amendment and reassurances that church-owned schools were exempt from the legislation, Congress passed the act over Reagan's veto.

The act's supporters have repeatedly made assurances that indirect federal monies such as food stamps, farm subsidies, and sewer grants would not force mom-and-pop grocery stores, family farmers, or municipalities to comply with federal civil rights laws and regulations. Utah's senator Orrin Hatch disagrees. According to him, the legislation would "establish a flypaper bureaucracy, because virtually every individual or business or unit of government that comes into contact with this federal dollar—no matter how remotely or indirectly—will be 'caught' and subject to these requirements."

Senator Kennedy of Massachusetts has maintained that churches will not be affected and that the legislative comments accompanying the act would guide the federal courts in making their rulings. Remember Hubert Humphrey's promise on the floor of the Senate in 1964 that if the civil rights bill resulted in affirmative action he would "physically eat" the very paper upon which it was written? So much for legislative language. So much for "hysteria."

1994: Orwell Plus Ten

It is 1994. President Michael Dukakis's five appointees on the US Supreme Court make it the most activist, liberal Court in history. The US Congress, with 2-1 Democratic majorities in both Houses, has just passed gay civil rights legislation, prohibiting discrimination based on "sexual preference." President Dukakis praises the legislation, calling it "another great victory for civil rights and another step toward the day when all Americans will be equal."

Within days of passage of the gay rights legislation, Mormon-owned Brigham Young University, the largest church-owned school in the nation, fires a professor for homosexual conduct. The fired professor files suit in federal court, arguing that BYU students' annual receipt of $40 million in federally guaranteed student loans and PELL grants brings the university under the umbrella of the civil rights legislation. BYU claims its actions are protected by the First Amendment.

The case makes its way to the US Supreme Court. In a stunning and acrimonious 5-4 decision, the Court rules that the civil rights laws are superior to BYU's claim of First Amendment freedoms. The Supreme Court uses as precedent the 1982 Bob Jones University case in which the Court ignored Bob Jones's claims of religious freedoms and struck down the university's IRS tax-exempt status because it prohibited student interracial dating.

Associate Justice Barbara Jordan writes for the Supreme Court's majority: "The notion that Brigham Young University's so-called religious beliefs are sufficient to override the protections of gays, lesbians and other minorities is as illegitimate and abhorrent as the biblical justification of slavery made by Southerners in 19th-century America."

Buoyed by the Court's willingness to brush aside claims of First Amendment protections, homosexual job applicants previously rejected by BYU enlist the help of the ACLU and the Gay and Lesbian Legal Defense Fund to file a massive federal civil rights class

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action lawsuit against BYU on the following grounds:

1. BYU's IRS tax-exempt status channels funds to the university that would otherwise go to the federal treasury. The tax-exempt status results in the receipt of federal money, which brings the university under the jurisdiction of the civil rights laws.

2. Located in Provo, Utah, BYU comes under the civil rights laws because Provo City's roads funnel traffic on and off campus. The Provo City Streets Department receives federal money through the Utah State Department of Transportation's Urban Highway Fund.

3. Provo City's Department of Water and Waste Water is using an EPA revolving loan program to remodel its sewage disposal plant, which processes waste from BYU. The EPA loan is a federal subsidy because it is issued at below market rates.

The case reaches the Supreme Court in 1997. Once again, after a bitterly divisive debate among the justices, the liberal majority rules 5-4 in favor of the plaintiffs on all counts and orders BYU to either cease operating or implement an affirmative action hiring plan to increase to 10 percent the number of gay and lesbian professors.

On the same day the Court announces its BYU decision, the Gay and Lesbian Legal Defense Fund and the National Organization for Women file suit to deny the Mormon Church and its five million US members all receipt of federal money because the church and its members assert that homosexual acts are immoral, and refuse to ordain women and practicing homosexuals to the priesthood. Sound impossible? I wish.

Edward D. Snow Jr., a former congressional aide, is a freelance writer from Utah.

ETHNIC CONFLICT

Who Speaks for the Jews?

by Elliot C. Rothenberg

Just before the Minnesota caucuses, one of the nation's ten or so largest Reform Jewish synagogues, Minneapolis's Temple Israel, cosponsored a political speech by Kitty Dukakis at the synagogue's regular Friday evening sabbath service.

Temple Israel is typical of many synagogues around the country where liberal Democrats are regularly endorsed from the pulpit. The fondness of Jewish leaders for liberal politicians, of course, extends far beyond being a captive audience. It is hardly a secret that Jewish contributors generously finance liberals aspiring to high office.

The Jewish establishment's ties to liberal politics have a long history. But today there is no reason for Jews to indiscriminately support liberals, whatever justification there may have been in the past. Of all the nation's ethnic, religious, and interest groups, the political behavior of the Jewish leadership is the least consistent with its community's interests, and is often perversely inimical to them.

One would think that American Jewry's special political concerns (shared by most Christians as well) would be the preservation of a strong Israel, together with a militarily powerful America, Israel's only ally, and a rejection of bigotry and religious discrimination at home, with opportunities based solely on individual merit. Those are not the policies of the politicians Jewish leaders idolize.

The media has given extensive coverage to the generous support Greek Americans have given to Dukakis. There has been less coverage of the substantial help he has gotten from Jewish liberals. Many in the established Jewish leadership have not only given financial and philosophical support to Dukakis, but are actively working on his campaign. Hyman Bookbinder, the American Jewish Committee's chief Washington spokesman and congressional lobbyist, serves on the Dukakis campaign staff. At a recent Jewish leadership meeting, Bookbinder boasted that Dukakis will garner as much as 85 percent of the Jewish vote.

That notwithstanding, Dukakis subscribes to the conventional liberal foreign policy dogmas of unilateral American disarmament, sympathy for communist and terrorist regimes in the Third World, and increased deference in foreign policy to the dictates of the United Nations, despite its infamous "Zionism is racism" resolution and other anti-Semitic slanders.

In fact, even before Jewish audiences, Dukakis has declined to give so much as token lip service to concerns over the security of Israel. He has refused to rule out his acceptance of a Palestinian state ruled by the PLO. (Bookbinder views the creation of a PLO stronghold with similar insouciance.) Dukakis wants to turn over responsibility for a Middle East settlement (along with the resolution of other international issues) to the UN General Assembly.

It goes without saying that the left's objectives are not good for Israel. Although in this election year Dukakis and other liberal politicians are more circumspect, Democratic Party activists are increasingly vocal in their hostility to Israel. Several state Democratic conventions this year adopted resolutions demanding the creation of a PLO state, and polls indicate that more than 70 percent of the Democratic National Convention delegates favor the establishment of a Palestinian state in part (or *all*) of what is now Israel. In any Dukakis administration, Jesse Jackson is probably going to have great influence, which means Jackson may soon be able to hug Yasser Arafat from a position of governmental power.

Many important liberal Jewish leaders found Dukakis insufficiently liberal and backed Jackson this year — despite his "Hymietown" remarks and his assertion, during a trip to Israel yet, that he is "sick and tired of hearing about the Holocaust." In his 1988 campaign, the "reformed" or at least sanitized Jackson attacked Israel again, this time for supposedly invading Angola along with South Africa. No liberal Jewish leader has challenged Jackson for this fabrication.

On the contrary, the New York president of the American Jewish

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Committee, R. Peter Straus, was outspoken in his praise for Jackson during the New York primary. Dukakis was the big winner among New York's Jewish voters, but Jackson amassed almost as many Jewish votes as did Albert Gore, the only Democratic candidate who backed Israel's opposition to the creation of a PLO state.

The most important Jewish apologist for Jackson, though, is Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which purports to represent more than half of America's Jewish population. In a recent article for the leftist Jewish journal *Tikkun*, Rabbi Saperstein admits that Jackson "still manifests a disturbing discomfort with Jews." Nevertheless, he ascribes Jackson's anti-Semitism only to "an unnuanced analysis" and places the blame on an unsympathetic Jewish community for "failing to respond" to Jackson with "tangible and meaningful expressions of appreciation and encouragement." This, said Saperstein, "increasingly disappointed and frustrated" Jackson.

Much of the liberal drumbeat for an international conference on the creation of a PLO state comes from Jewish leaders. Last winter Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, vice-president of the World Jewish Congress, and Rabbi Wolf Kelman, vice-president of the Conservative Rabbinical Assembly, founded a group calling itself the Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East. Among the luminaries associated with this outfit is Louis Farrakhan. The group's executive director is the Middle East representative of the American Friends Service Committee, an organization which has loudly and consistently supported leftist movements around the world and has equally consistently opposed Israel's actions in self-defense. Not to be outdone, Albert Vorspan, director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' social action program, wrote a "courageous" let-it-all-hang-out piece in the *New York Times Magazine* in which he violated confidences and censured Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and those American Jews who support his policies. Also getting into the act were hundreds of Jewish liberal activists, led by Hertzberg and the editors of *Tikkun*, who have purchased full page advertisements in leading newspapers proclaiming their demands for the "immediate" establishment of a PLO state, regardless of the consequences for Israel.

The eagerness of the established Jewish leadership to embrace accepted liberal wisdom often reaches dual heights of hilarity and self-destructiveness. Jewish women's groups and united funding organizations around the country (which pressure middle-class Jews to contribute for the stated purpose of helping community members in need) recently sponsored and financed a series of speeches by an obscure Israeli feminist activist, Alice Shalvi. Shalvi calls Israel's miraculous victory in the 1967 Six-Day War a "terrible turning point of the blunting of a Jewish moral sensibility." The "aggressive tendencies" it engendered, according to her, have led to an increased abuse of Israeli women. Shalvi, and presumably the liberal leaders who promote her, believe that Israel's defeat of those who threatened a second Holocaust not long after the first one "runs counter to our deep sense of justice."

The disdain of the established Jewish organizations for their obligations to American Jewry extends beyond the security interests of Israel to what should be the issue that troubles them the most—the continuing plague of anti-Semitism. While the liberal Jewish leadership is now engaging in a frenetic campaign to stamp out JAP (Jewish American princess) jokes (which largely originated with Jewish males), it has been impotent or worse in dealing with contemporary society's most frightening manifestation of anti-Semitism—the veritable epidemic of it among the black *nomenklatura* and intelligentsia.

Black politicians in Chicago have launched an extremely vicious and concerted anti-Semitic assault. In a recent ruckus over a satiric painting of the late mayor, Harold Washington, black aldermen and appointees vehemently maligned Jews in general—though the painting was done by an art student who was not Jewish. A disciple of Louis Farrakhan named Steve Cokely, formerly a close aide of current Mayor Eugene Sawyer, has called Christopher Columbus "a Hispanic Jewboy" and charged that a conspiracy of Jewish doctors "who inject AIDS into blacks" has produced and spread the disease. Far from repudiating Cokely, black politicians have rallied behind him. The chairman of the city's Commission on Human Relations, of all people, declared that the idea of a nefarious worldwide Jewish conspiracy against blacks has "a ring of truth."

The silence of Michael Dukakis and the "new" Jesse Jackson (a Chicago resident) on this explosion of anti-Semitism among black Chicago Democrats has been deafening. But the reaction of the liberal Jewish leadership has been no better.

In contrast to their vigorous action on the JAP joke front, the Jewish organizations have tried only to appease these blacks, calling for a "dialogue" between the defamers and the defamed. The regional director of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League even publicly chastised Rev. Andrew Greeley, the Roman Catholic priest and author, for saying that Jews should be "terrified" at the intensity of black anti-Semitism in Chicago.

As a matter of fact, the liberal Jewish leadership itself bears more than some of the blame for the descent of Chicago politics into its present savagery. The machine of anti-Semitic loons now running Chicago would never have come to power but for Jewish support. In 1983 Harold Washington won his first mayoralty election only by the smallest of margins over Republican attorney and ex-legislator Bernard Epton. Epton had overwhelming support from all white groups except from the city's Jewish voters. Despite the fact that Epton himself is Jewish, liberal Jewish leaders abandoned him in favor of the putatively more "liberal" Washington, who was able to edge out Epton only because of his votes from upper-middle-class Jewish residents living on the shores of Lake Michigan and in the University of Chicago area.

Dukakis passes another liberal litmus test in supporting affirmative action quotas, by which qualified persons are denied jobs and admission to schools in favor of less capable members of preferred racial and gender groups. Jews are not included in these groups. The Jewish community has suffered particular harm from quotas:

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for most of this century, the nation's toniest educational institutions used quotas for the explicit purpose of excluding intellectually able Jewish applicants. Still, liberal Jewish leaders are zealous advocates of affirmative action. One of the chief gripes the American Jewish Congress and the National Council of Jewish Women had against Judge Robert Bork was his refusal to embrace reverse discrimination as holy writ.

The political hypocrisy of the established Jewish leadership may reach a dubious zenith on the issue of intermarriage. For a long time intermarriage has been a *bête noire* with rabbis and Jewish organizations. Nevertheless, Jewish liberal activists have lionized Jewish Kitty and Greek Orthodox Michael Dukakis for their chicly "ecumenical" marriage. One gushing New York rabbi campaigning with Mrs. Dukakis before the New York primary likened her to the biblical Esther, the Jewish wife of a Persian king. Just a few months earlier, however, these same folks—including a major New York liberal Jewish weekly and officials of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the American Jewish Congress—were reviling Supreme Court nominee Douglas Ginsburg for, among other things, his marriage to a woman who was not born Jewish. At around the same time, Reform and Conservative rabbis were officiating with a priest at the wedding of New York governor Mario Cuomo's daughter to a Jewish groom who agreed to raise their future children as Catholics. The explanation for this seeming incongruity is that the Dukakises and Cuomo are certified liberals, while Ginsburg is perceived as a conservative. To many Jewish leaders, intermarriage is a vice or a virtue depending upon the politics of the parties involved.

All of this obeisance to the fashionable opinions and personalities of the political and intellectual left embarrasses and actively harms American Jews. The real American Jewish community has put off for too long an agonizing reappraisal of the scandalous political activities of those who are only ostensibly acting on its behalf. At the very least, synagogues should not be in the business of using religious services to endorse candidates—any candidates.

The Jewish rabbinical and lay leadership regularly accuses the Christian right of confounding religion and politics. It is doing at least the same thing itself, only on behalf of liberal politicians and issues. The lesson is obvious. The established Jewish leadership should abandon its political pretensions and return to, or begin, serving the religious and other needs of the Jewish community. Otherwise, American Jewry should look for new spiritual and secular leaders.

Elliot C. Rothenberg, a Minneapolis trial lawyer, is president of the North Star Legal Foundation and a past national law director of the Anti-Defamation League.

POP CULTURE

Live from San Diego, It's Vladimir Posner

by K.L. Billingsley

On any Wednesday night, there's plenty to do in San Diego, or "America's Finest City," as it is billed. But tonight the locals pack the University of California lecture hall to hear Vladimir Posner, the Soviet Union's most famous journalist. (Since it has often been pointed out that "Soviet journalist" is oxymoronic, we won't get into that here, except to say that "television journalist" is probably an oxymoron, too. As far as I know, Posner is not a "Soviet writer.") Posner is a big draw at the campus where Herbert Marcuse once held forth on repressive tolerance. In fact, so many show up that the overflow is stuffed into an adjacent hall where they will have to watch on closed circuit television.

It's a mixed group: students, curious baby boomers, and plenty of older folks. Pamphleteers from the John Birch Society and the Union of Jewish Students work the crowd. Their wares litter the floor. There is much pushing and shoving.

"What's the fuss?" someone says. "He's just some Bolshevik in a suit." A younger man laughs, but one elderly lady looks offended. "I think he's cute," answers a tangly blonde straight out of a Sprite commercial, evidently there to look, not listen.

The star himself is over in a corner, chatting up some television people. At first glance he looks a bit like a car salesman, definitely smaller than life. But once on the podium he takes on a professional bearing. I half expect him to remove his glasses and say something like: "Nine out of ten doctors . . ."

After a long, thunderous ovation, Posner says he is "overwhelmed" that so many have showed up. (At this, many in the crowd look proud of themselves just for being there.) He adds that he is not an official Soviet government spokesman, though if someone should want to know the official line, he will of course give it.

What he is here to do is to correct certain "myths" about the USSR held by Americans. These myths are not accidental, he adds, but deliberately cultivated. He refers to some 1920 *New York Times* cartoons showing short, fat Bolsheviks with bushy eyebrows and knives held in their teeth. "Do I look like a Russian?" he says, in his perfect English (Posner was raised in Brooklyn). The crowd loves it.

He scores more laughs at Joe Biden's expense by stating that he will be careful to fully attribute all quotes. One is a piece of anti-Soviet hysteria from the Congressional Record in the early 1920's, complete with a phony line from Lenin about "taking over" the United States. Now, Posner could have supplied a genuine quip from Lenin such as, "the scientific definition of a dictatorship is a power that is not limited by any laws, not bound by any rules, and based directly on force," but he didn't. He could have pointed out, as Intourist guides do, that the Soviet star represents the five continents, but, after all, he is here to calm us.

He cites a Gallup poll purportedly showing that most Americans are unaware that the Soviets and Americans fought on the same side in World War II. What terrible ignorance; he's right. But as I listen, I wonder how many of these people have ever heard of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact that carved up Poland. And how many remember that, until 1941, Stalin and Hitler were allies, and that Stalin cheered Hitler's attacks on England and the West? Or that during that time, the Soviets hand-

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ed over thousands of German-Jewish communists to the Gestapo? Vladimir skirts this inconvenient business. "We were allies," he says, as though he himself had been there quaffing vodka and swapping war stories with Patton on VE day.

Next he explains how Khrushchev's "We will bury you!" was a mistranslation. All Nikita really meant, he says, was that the inevitable progress of history would leave capitalism behind. *It was all a misunderstanding.*

Americans and Russians apparently have some similarities. "You had your wild West, we had our wild East." This gets some laughs. But there are also differences, Vladimir says, and there is no use pretending these do not exist.

For example, those differing Western and Eastern views of freedom and human rights. You know, those Western bourgeois trifles like elections, freedom of speech, religion, and assembly, as opposed to a guaranteed job, government housing, and free education and medical care in the East. We could argue about these all night, he says, but one must understand and respect the other view.

One must also understand that Russia had no democratic tradition, he continues. They had a czar. He does not mention that the Bolsheviks were counterrevolutionaries who overthrew not the czar but the provisional government of Kerensky, the closest thing to a democracy ever to exist in Russia. Vladimir isn't one to quibble over details.

In solidarity with the psalmist, Posner concedes that "our own transgressions" are partly to blame for tensions. Then, with a voice like that of a doctor describing a cancer, he speaks of "the Stalin period" with its "mass purges" in which "20 million people were sent to labor camps," where "many died and many were executed." But such things are all in the past; in the USSR it's a bright new day.

Here rolls the long commercial for *glasnost*, which is "nothing short of a revolution." Why, under *glasnost* the Soviets are "going to the source." *Glasnost* will make the USSR "more socialist, not less." Posner has heard a nasty rumor that *glasnost* is "just window dressing for the West," but that is just another example of pernicious Western mythmaking.

Now comes the carrot and the stick. Both sides "owe it to themselves" to understand each other; that's the carrot. And "if we don't communicate, we're dead"; that's the stick. His choice of words causes a slight stir. Fortunately, as is clear from the bumper stickers on their Volvos, these San Diegans know full well that you can't hug a child with nuclear arms.

Like all telly men, Vladimir knows the limits of the human attention span and doesn't carry on too long. The only disturbance comes with the questions. Some young Afghans begin shouting something about the Soviets invading their country and killing their people. The crowd doesn't like this interruption from these crude complainers and yells at them to "go home," at which point the police helpfully remove the local *mujahideen*, much to the approval of the speaker and the rest of the audience. When Posner takes his bow, the applause is deafening. They love him in San Diego. (They gave him the key to the city.)

On the way back to the car I recall that when George Orwell was writing *Animal Farm*, his friend Malcolm Muggeridge suggested that at the point where the pigs had learned to walk like humans he should introduce a host of fellow travelers going about on all fours. It is depressing that when Soviet pitchmen have perfected their act, so many trendy Californians are on their hands and knees, lapping it up and loving it.

K.L. Billingsley is a writer living near San Diego.

Surfin' Safari

by Gary S. Vasilash

It's my party and I'll cry if I want to; You would cry, too, if it happened to you.

—Lesley Gore, 1963

Mike Love's churlish behavior at the third Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremonies should not have come as a surprise to anyone. His outlash against everyone from Paul McCartney to Diana Ross could have been predicted by Nancy Reagan's astrologer.

First of all, consider Mike Love. He alone among The Beach Boys has had a problem since the mid-1960's. If you look at early Beach Boys album covers (circa 1963), you'll see the Boys in identical striped shirts and white cotton pants. It's that clean California look—or what was once the look. Love, unlike the others, has a short haircut. His curly hair hugs the head; the others are more flaxen. As time goes on, the hair of the other Boys lengthens; Love's falls out. Imagine the strain of going through the 60's and 70's as a balding middle-aged "boy," condemned to sing "Ba-ba-ba, Ba-ba-er-ran") in a castrato range.

The Beach Boys have had a chip as big as a surfboard on their collective shoulder for the past 20 years. Brian Wilson, the "eccentric genius" of the group, made some comments in his interview for the 20th anniversary issue of *Rolling Stone* that are illustrative in this regard. Brian says that when he made "Good Vibrations," now well-known as a soda pop commercial, he thought, "This is gonna be better than 'You've Lost that Lovin' Feelin'.'" But the Righteous Brothers were small time. The Beach Boys had—and continue to have, according to Love—bigger targets. Brian continues:

> When the Beatles first hit, we were real jealous, of course, I couldn't handle the fact that there were these four handsome guys from England coming over here to America to invade our territory, you know? When we saw how loud everybody was screaming for the Beatles, it was like "Whoa!" We couldn't believe it. . . . The Beatles beat us, in a way. Their songs were more original. I think as a songwriting idea, the Beatles beat us. But as an overall, versatile group sound, I think we tied 'em. You know? I think we tied.

Given that Brian is/was the brains of the group, is it any wonder that Love ripped into Paul McCartney for not showing up at the awards ceremony? What astonishes me is that he didn't take John Lennon to task for not being there.

The last time The Beach Boys were most in the news was in 1983, when Secretary of the Interior James Watt supposedly banned them from a July 4

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concert on the mall. Watt, according to his retelling in *The Courage of a Conservative*, had issued a memo stating that the July 4, 1983, performances on the mall in Washington, DC, be those that "point to the glories of America in a patriotic and inspirational way that will attract the family." It seems that during the previous year's event, at which the Grass Roots (a band that in 1982 must have been on about its 12th revival tour in an unmemorable career) played, drugs were in evidence. Instead of announcing a drug crackdown, Watt seems to have figured that an appeal to the flag would be more satisfactory. Euphemisms can get you into trouble. Watt remembers: "Newspapers and media flashed across America the 'news' that I had cancelled The Beach Boys concert. I had, in fact, done no such thing. I had not used their name, nor had any reference been made to them either directly or indirectly by me or anyone else. I learned later that they had not even been booked in the first place."

For Watt it was a fiasco, made worse by the appearance of Wayne Newton as the paragon of family entertainment. Let's face it: Las Vegas isn't exactly the mecca of family values. Even in Sodom it had a bad name. By those standards, The Beach Boys were paragons of apple pie virtue. They couldn't have bought better publicity. A few years later, the Boys have added Vegas to their schedule.

The Beach Boys seem to thrive on martyrdom. Why else would they sing backup vocals for The Fat Boys? Then there's the reaction to David Lee Roth, perennial bad boy who did a cover of "California Girls" — a version that doesn't smell of Ivory soap. "California Girls" became a hit, and since The Beach Boys seem to be incapable of performing any songs that they didn't do 20 years ago. Mike Love now has to introduce the song with remarks like "Now we'll show you how it's *really* done."

In 1966, The Who was big on the charts with "My Generation," the song with that nefarious line, "Hope I die before I get old." It was all the more outrageous then — though we now look at it while we cluck our tongues knowingly — because 1966 was the year that we were singing along with the feel-good "Barbara Ann," "Good Vibrations," and "Sloop John B."

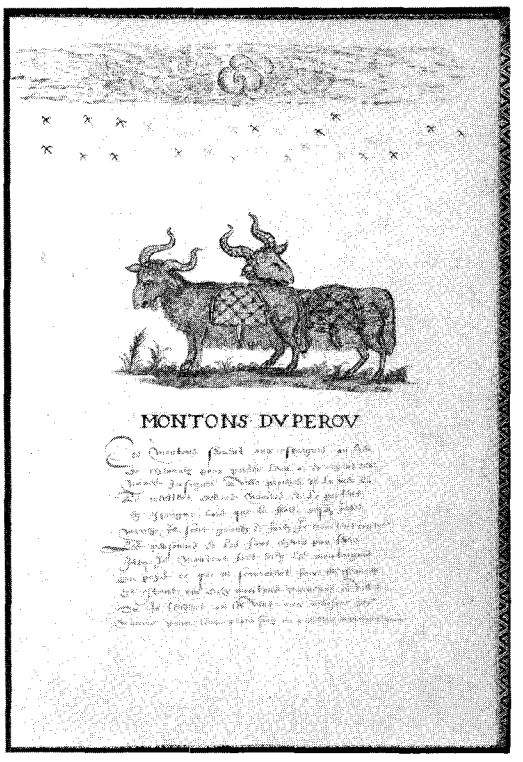
A few years ago, The Who had its farewell tour. Recently, the word was out that too high life-styles of now-older band members were going to result in a return of the quartet. The group was confident that a few appearances would get their creditors off their doorsteps. But before the tour was realized, Roger Daltry announced that he was retiring; he observed that he thought it ridiculous for a man who could be a grandfather to try to do pop songs for an audience that consists, for the most part, of allowance-clutching 10-year-olds.

Daltry is certainly one of the best vocalists of my generation; he is, perhaps, our Tony Bennett. I hope that he continues to sing, rather than concentrate entirely on movies, as he has threatened to do. Pete Townshend will undoubtedly continue to take breaks from his editorial duties in London.

In any case, Daltry has learned something that Mike Love will never figure out. Surf's up, Mike. Why don't you hang it up and go try to hang ten?

One of Gary Vasilash's earliest lessons was "Be true to your school, just as you would to your girl."

ART



Drake at the Morgan

The caption for the drawings of llamas above reads (in part): "These sheep are used by the Spanish to carry their gold and silver from the mines. . . . They are big and strong, and they push into people and make them fall down." This from the "Drake Manuscript" or *Histoire Naturelle des Indes* (ca. 1590) which was on view at the Morgan last spring. According to Verlyn Klinkenborg, guest curator of this exhibition, these watercolors were created by an anonymous painter who may or may not have accompanied Sir Francis Drake on his voyages to the New World. (They are somewhat freely rendered; given the common problem of mistaking llamas for a kind of sheep, llamas were often, as here, given horns they don't possess in nature.) The manuscript was discovered only in 1867 in London and disappeared for a century before being bequeathed to the Morgan by Clara S. Peck in 1983. — Shebaz H. Safrani

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Krystyna Jachniewicz

Krystyna Jachniewicz and I studied together at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, and received our masters in fine art and illustration in 1979. That year the magazine *Poland* published an article reviewing the work we did for our diplomas and wondering what was going to happen to us. Well, both of us, not so young anymore, have crossed paths many times since immigrating to the United States. Krystyna has done several illustrations for *Chronicles*, among them the February 1988 cover. The photo, however, is from her first individual show in New York City, held at the Tobe International Gallery in June. It is not easy being an artist, in either country. From all of us at *Chronicles*, congratulations, Krystyna, on a successful show. (AMW)

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On 'Letter from B.U.'

Since I am the "neoconservative sociologist" referred to in S. Steven Powell's article ("Letter From B.U.," September 1988), I suppose that it falls to me to respond to it, distasteful though this is. Apart from its distorted account of Powell's quest for a dissertation topic, the article is an exhibit of monumental ingratitude toward an institution and a group of people who went to considerable lengths trying to be helpful to a young scholar.

I will not engage Powell's description of Boston University as a place saddled with mediocrity and liberal bias. He has the right to his opinion. I will only point out that, as far as the persistence of liberalism on this campus is concerned, this would constitute a backhanded compliment to the administration of Boston University that has often been portrayed as practising a heavy-handed ideological policy: American academia is indeed dominated by liberalism; no administration, whatever its ideological coloration, can alter this within the canons of academic freedom, and there is indeed academic freedom at Boston University.

Powell appeared in my office here, seemingly a bright, enthusiastic and somewhat unconventional graduate student—just the sort that I, for one, like to help. Among other things I secured a graduate fellowship for him, gave him an office in the research center I direct, introduced him to other individuals and to events that I thought would interest him. I did indeed have difficulties with his proposed dissertation topic. He intended to use as a dissertation a study, already well-advanced upon his arrival at BU, of the Institute for Policy Studies (the study has recently been published as a book). I read portions of this manuscript and discussed the matter with Powell on several occasions. I could not see my way to supervising this dissertation for two reasons—not (as Powell states in the article) because a dissertation should not also be published as a book, but because (as he also states) a dissertation status should not be bestowed *ex post facto* on a work begun elsewhere and without faculty supervision and, most important (which Powell does not mention), because I did not feel competent to evaluate this particular piece of work. Powell thereupon tried to secure dissertation supervision from other members of the faculty who had similar problems. It was then that he and I agreed that a dissertation on the concept of entrepreneurship would be feasible—*not* because it was "some irrelevant academic subject about which no one was likely to object," but because it was possible to assemble a competent committee under my supervision and because it appeared likely that Powell could do the necessary work in a reasonable period of time.

This, then, was the dissertation that Powell completed at BU. He worked on it with great diligence and he produced an acceptable manuscript. All three members of his committee (myself as sociologist, a political scientist and an economist) provided the usual criticisms and suggestions. The economist on the committee, a very distinguished member of the BU faculty, went to extraordinary lengths to help Powell complete the work in time for a June graduation. I too will not forget the "last all-nighters" that Powell mentions in his article. The economist on the committee was sick in bed and nevertheless agreed to have Powell

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drive out to his house to hand in the final revisions so that the graduation deadline could be met—and, despite his illness, read and approved them on time. Powell apparently cannot appreciate even the most unusual kindness from people of whose bumper stickers he disapproves.

The notion that Powell was given a hard time at BU because of his libertarianism is ludicrous. He evidently regards himself as one in "the younger generation of students" who will "shake things up a bit." If these are the allies to whom we should look for support, we can stop worrying over our adversaries.

—Peter L. Berger
University Professor
Boston University
Boston, MA

On 'Art as Politics'

In "Art as Politics: Rebecca West's Unpleasant Mirror" (*Chronicles*, July 1988), the writer refers to "Lord Haw-Haw" (the English traitor who broadcast Nazi propaganda to Britain in the early days of WW II) as William Jones. In the interests of historical accuracy, Lord Haw-Haw's correct name was William Joyce. Joyce's family were from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire, and as a schoolboy at Ashby Grammar School, myself and the other boys (and most of Britain for that matter) used to tune in to Lord Haw-Haw's broadcasts as a form of comic relief during the Battle of Britain. He would arrive on the air with his high-pitched, BBC-cultivated accent under the call sign, "Germany Calling . . . Germany Calling."

Joyce and his wife defected to the Third Reich when war broke out in September 1939, yet oddly enough, he was an ardent communist with a vitriolic hatred of capitalism. William Shirer, in his book *The Nightmare Years*, tells how Joyce considered himself to be no more a traitor than those Germans who gave up their nationality to become American citizens after 1848!

—Dr. Alastair Segerdal
Riverside, WA

On 'Rights of Clergy'

I would like to encourage Mr. Thomas Fleming ("Perspective," September 1988) in the same way that the quiet voice encouraged Elijah, to let him know that he was not alone. I am a clergyman who attended seminary in the 60's. As a Lutheran I certainly agree with Mr. Fleming. The church ought to be taxed if it enjoys the benefits of the regime. Military service is a form of taxation. Luther, in his tract of 1520, "To the Christian Noblemen," urged the taxing of churches in Saxony. It is true that in Luther's day a lot of church property was farmed, or otherwise put to profitable use. I don't believe he advocated taxing the sanctuary. But the point is that an organization cannot escape its civic responsibilities simply by claiming that its function is religious. If a church owns breweries, they should not be exempt. Likewise, when a young man is still in school, there is no reason why he couldn't be drafted.

Another famous Lutheran, Rev. Peter Muhlenberg, in 1775 concluded the Sunday service in his little church in the Blue Ridge, then removed his vestments to reveal a colonel's uniform in the Continental Army. Within the hour he had recruited a large number of his parishioners into his regiment. In the event of another critical war, I would consider myself firmly in his tradition if I volunteered for such service as I believe would be most helpful to my country. And after we won the war, I would be glad to resume my pulpit. The term of military service would no more discredit me from the holy ministry than conquering Canaan prevented Joshua from building an altar at Shechem.

It is true that we must not "reduce" Christianity to anything secular, but we must also be careful not to reduce it to something we do one hour a week. Jesus commended us to give Caesar what is his. God has placed us into the USA—to serve it honorably is a good work.

—Rev. Lloyd E. Gross
Parma, OH

On 'Fathers are Striking Back'

Opposition to, or support for, abortion is generally based on a system of beliefs. "Man in himself is a symbol of authority," Bryce Christensen ("Cultural Revolutions," August 1988) quotes Wyndham Lewis as observing. A symbol, however, is not always timeless. If a man wishes for "paternal authority," he should also be willing to mingle with it an element of shared parental authority. Perhaps a place to start is with a pre-pregnancy discussion and mutual assurance that both he and his wife will accept the child. Else, deterence, whether by abstinence or barrier, should be mandatory.

—Joseph Mueller
Excelsior, MN

On 'Hangouts for the KGB'

As a librarian, it was reassuring to notice that someone outside the library profession has seen into the domain of librarianship and realized that all is not well ("Cultural Revolutions," September 1988). Indeed, Matthew Kaufman's commentary on the unthinking and uncritical deeds within librarianship—the American sort, at least—were witheringly trenchant and, regardless of what many librarians would staunchly deny, pointedly accurate.

Librarianship is the fief of the left. These new librarians, as Russell Kirk sketched in *Reclaiming a Patrimony*, cling to "ravening liberty." For them, there are no standards of right and wrong, there are no materials unsuitable for any community, there is no imaginable reason why pro-American is preferable to pro-Sandinista literature, there are never any circumstances in which traitors to the United States and the Constitution should be identified, and, accordingly, there are never conditions in which the obligation to "ravening liberty" is not the highest ideal for the professional librarian.

—Terrence Neal Brown
Memphis, TN

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transaction

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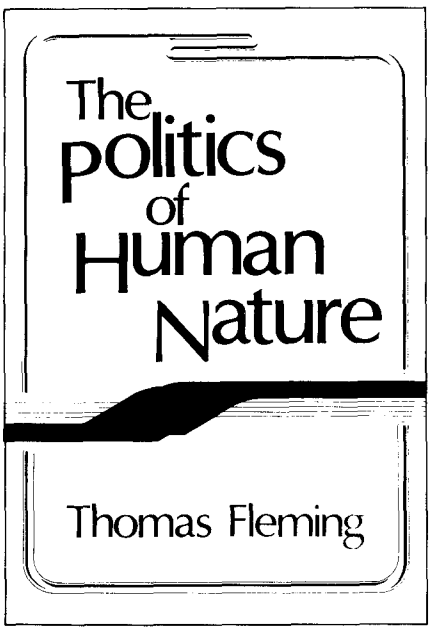

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Thomas Fleming

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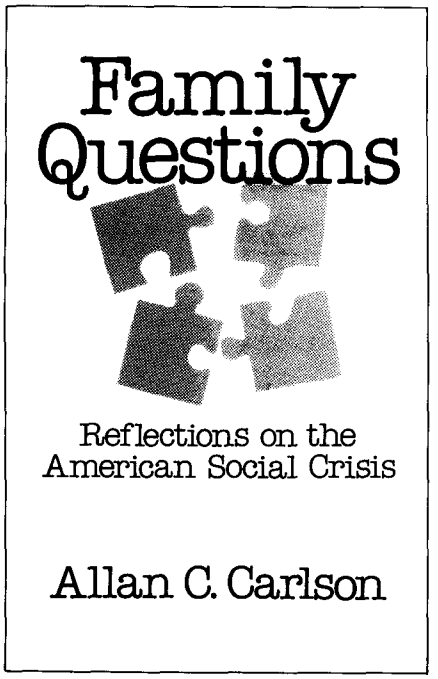

FAMILY QUESTIONS
REFLECTIONS ON THE AMERICAN SOCIAL CRISIS

Allan Carlson

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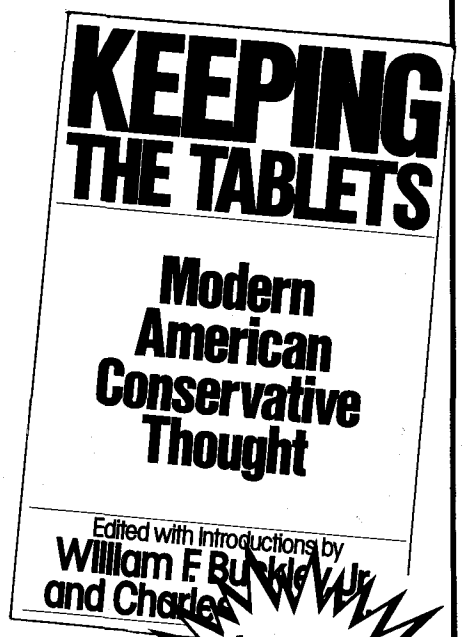

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